THE AMERICAN
Legion
www.legion.org
$2.50 JANUARY 2015
The magazine for a strong America

ENCORE!
Service strikes a chord in all-veteran band

RICKENBACKER'S FIRST KILL

VA's period of preventable deaths

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY SINCE 1919

Introducing ***The new and revolutionary*** **Jacuzzi® Hydrotherapy Shower.**

AGING = PAIN

For many, arthritis and spinal disc degeneration are the most common source of pain, along with hips, knees shoulders and the neck. In designing the Jacuzzi Hydrotherapy Shower, we worked with expert physicians to maximize its pain relieving therapy by utilizing the correct level of water pressure to provide gentle yet effective hydrotherapy.

JACUZZI® SHOWER = RELIEF

Four Jacuzzi® ShowerPro™ Jets focus on the neck, back, hips and knees and may help ease the pain and discomfort of:

- Arthritis
- Circulation Issues
- Aches and pains
- Neuropathy
- Sciatica
- Inflammation

The Jacuzzi® Hydrotherapy Shower provides a lifetime of comfort and relief… safely and affordably.

As we age, the occasional aches and pains of everyday life become less and less occasional. Most of us are bothered by sore muscles, creaky joints and general fatigue as we go through the day- and it's made worse by everything from exertion and stress to arthritis and a number of other ailments. Sure, there are pills and creams that claim to provide comfort, but there is only one 100% natural way to feel better… hydrotherapy. Now, the world leader in hydrotherapy has invented the only shower that features Jacuzzi® Jets. It's called the Jacuzzi® Hydrotherapy Shower, and it can truly change your life.

For over 50 years, the Jacuzzi® Design Engineers have worked to bring the powerful benefits of soothing hydrotherapy into millions of homes. Now, they've created a system that can fit in the space of your existing bathtub or shower and give you a lifetime of enjoyment, comfort and pain-relief. They've thought of everything. From the high-gloss acrylic surface, slip-resistant flooring, a hand-held shower wand to a comfortable and adjustable seat, to strategically-placed grab bars and lots of storage, this shower has it all.

Why wait to experience the Jacuzzi® Hydrotherapy Shower? Call now… it's the first step in getting relief from those aches and pains.

Call toll free now and find out how you can receive your FREE special report

Mention promotional code 59698

1-888-539-4059

Jacuzzi®

© 2014 by Aging In The Home Remodelers

82007

THE AMERICAN

Legion

Special Announcement

Legionnaire and USAA members' legacy begins with service.

USAA®

UNITED BY PRINCIPLES

"WHAT DOES SERVICE MEAN TO ME? It means being the one who stands up, gets involved and does something to make a difference." Straight talk from Gerry (that's short for Geraldine) Hince, a retired Army colonel, who after 32 years of military service is busier than ever supporting veterans and her local community.

Her husband shares the same passion. John Hince served in Vietnam, worked as an educator and coach, and is now commander of The American Legion's 2nd Division of Texas.

Both Gerry and John are members of American Legion Post 159 in Bryan, Texas. Throughout 41 years of marriage, they've devoted their lives to service. They've instilled the same sense of selfless duty in their children. **And, as active Legionnaires and members of USAA, they surround themselves with people and organizations that mirror their values.**

John Hince, USAA member since 1969 | *Gerry Hince, USAA member since 1970*

Photos for this special advertising section were taken at Shades of Green on WALT DISNEY WORLD® Resort. Their "Salute to Our Veterans" Program gives members of The American Legion — and all military veterans who have received an Honorable discharge — the opportunity to vacation at Shades of Green during the months of January and September.

Peter Hince,
USAA member since 2003

Matthew Hince,
USAA member since 2001

⚹ A COMMON THREAD

"It was a part of who I was from the beginning," says Gerry, whose father served in World War II. "We saw in our parents that this idea of serving others is what we're put on earth to do. And in the United States, the best way to serve others is in uniform in the military."

"For me it started at the Virginia Military Institute," says John. "I learned about integrity and loyalty, and I was challenged at a young age with a lot of responsibilities I wouldn't have had otherwise." John served as a pilot in Vietnam. "I was only in for a short time, but the Army had a profound influence on my life."

It's a legacy that resonates across generations.

Of the Hinces' three sons, two have served in the U.S. military. Matt served in Afghanistan and now lives in North Texas. Peter is still active duty.

"It makes us proud that the boys are invested in their country — they've shown that through their military service — but they are also deeply invested in their communities, participating in causes that make a difference in people's lives," says John.

The Hinces became proud in-laws when Matt and Peter married women whose parents or grandparents had also served. "Now there's this tremendous appreciation for the military community throughout our extended family," says Gerry.

"It's a legacy our children are passing on to their children. And I wouldn't be surprised if our grandkids carry on the tradition."

PAYING IT FORWARD

LEGACY is not a word the Hinces throw around lightly. It means something special.

"To me, it's an intangible set of principles that we instill in the next generation," says John. "It's about taking the things in life that are most important to us and passing them on."

For John and Gerry, duties to God and country top the list, and serving one's fellow man follows closely. Yet there are elements of their legacy that are more utilitarian — their financial security, for example, much of which they credit to the stewardship of USAA. It's an organization they've trusted since 1969 to look out for their family's best interests.

"A lot of companies talk about being committed to veterans. USAA walks the walk," says Gerry. "They show tangible evidence time and time again."

The couple recalls several examples as if they happened yesterday: an ice storm that put a hole in their roof; an unfortunate series of auto accidents; a pending government shutdown that would leave their son without pay.

"Through it all, USAA has never failed to be there for us," says John. "Now our sons are both members, and because of that, their kids can become members too."

As the Hinces will attest, USAA's alliance with The American Legion is anything but arbitrary. It's a commitment to a common state of mind.

"If we're truly going to pass a legacy forward, it's up to like-minded people and organizations to come together and work to keep our shared values intact," says Gerry.

"That's what makes stronger communities and ultimately a stronger nation."

Continued on inside back cover

TO HONOR YOUR SERVICE TO COUNTRY

U.S. MILITARY WAR VETERAN BIRTHSTONE RINGS

Featuring the Official War Medal & Ribbon, War Memorial, Your Service Emblem & Personal Birthstones or Diamonds

We proudly present our Exclusive United States Military War Veteran Service Rings as powerful reminders of the bravery and sacrifice made by so many who served during these terrible conflicts.

The top of the ring features a SOLID 10KT GOLD Service Emblem of your choice set against a background of gleaming black enamel. Eight of your personal birthstones flank your Service Emblem. Your engraved Service Name completes the dramatic ring top.

One shank features your War Medal/Ribbon in official colors. The other shank the War Memorial (WWII, Korea, Vietnam) or an additional Service Emblem. Honor Recipients may have their Medal/Ribbon in place of the Memorial shank.

VIETNAM SERVICE
Shown with Army and optional Diamonds†

Each ring is custom-crafted in New England by America's finest maker of Military "Honor Rings," with solid 10KT gold Emblems, solid Sterling Silver ring bodies richly detailed in 24KT antiqued gold and smooth inner bands. Our rings are never hollowed out! Your initials and year dates of service are engraved inside to permanently mark your ring.

"Thank you" priced at a remarkably low $239* (†Optional genuine Diamond rings are $389*.) An affordable payment plan is available. See order form for details. Your satisfaction is guaranteed or you may return your ring within 30 days for replacement or refund — no questions asked. So, order yours today!

YOU HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO WEAR THIS EXCLUSIVE WAR VETERAN SERVICE RING TO HONOR YOUR PLACE IN HISTORY.

IRAQ
Shown with Navy and Sapphires

DESERT STORM
Shown with Air Force and Aquamarine

WORLD WAR II
Shown with Marine Corps and Rubies

KOREAN SERVICE
Shown with Coast Guard and Emeralds

CHOICE OF BIRTHSTONE: Names refer to color. Stones simulated for consistent size and color. Optional: Eight 2 PT genuine Diamonds available. See order form for details.

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
GARNET	AMETHYST	AQUAMARINE	ZIRCON	EMERALD	ALEXANDRITE	RUBY	PERIDOT	SAPPHIRE	ROSE ZIRCON	GOLDEN SAPPHIRE	BLUE ZIRCON

HONOR RECIPIENTS may have their Medal & Ribbon opposite their War Medal & Ribbon. *See order form.*

FREE FLAG PIN WITH ORDER

FOR FASTEST SERVICE CALL TOLL FREE TO ORDER: **1-800-255-3048**
Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm EST. Have Credit card and ring size ready when ordering.

Or, Mail to: Veterans Commemoratives™ Rings, Two Radnor Corporate Center, Suite 120, Radnor, PA 19087-4599

☐ **YES.** I wish to order my War Veteran Service Ring personalized as follows:

WAR SERVICE: ☐ WWII ☐ Korean Service ☐ Vietnam Service ☐ Desert Storm ☐ Iraq ☐ Afghanistan *(not shown)*

SERVICE BRANCH: ☐ Army ☐ Navy ☐ Air Force ☐ Marine Corps ☐ Coast Guard *Not shown:* ☐ Merchant Marine ☐ Navy Seal ☐ Seabee

Initials Desired (3): ___ ___ ___ **Service Yrs:** _____ **to** _____

Ring Size: _____ (Use ring sizer below or consult jeweler) **Birthstone Mo. (1):** _____

☐ **I prefer all Diamonds** for an extra $150* added to my first payment.

☐ **I AM AN HONOR RECIPIENT.** Please include my Medal & Ribbon on my ring: ☐ Purple Heart ☐ Bronze Star ☐ Silver Star
NOTE: A copy of your DD214 or other authorizing document must be sent with your order. Thank You.

I NEED SEND NO MONEY NOW. Bill me in 4 monthly installments of $59.75* each, with the first payment due prior to shipment.

SHIPPING ADDRESS *(We CANNOT ship to P.O. Boxes) Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.*

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # (_____) _____ Email _____

Signature _____

† Diamond Birthstones add $150.00* to first payment.
* Plus $14.95 for shipping and handling.
PA residents add 6% state sales tax.

WARBRS-ALM-0115

RING SIZE GUIDE
CUT THIS OUT CAREFULLY
USE AS SHOWN ON FINGER

© ICM 2015. These rings have been registered with the United States Copyright Office as sculpture.

FOR MORE FINE MILITARY RINGS & WATCHES VISIT VETERANS COMMEMORATIVES™ ONLINE AT WWW.VETCOM.COM

contents

January 2015 • Vol. 178, No. 1

18 First Blood
Competition, controlled fears and a desperate craving for a shootdown put Eddie Rickenbacker on a path to become America's "ace of aces." *By John F. Ross*

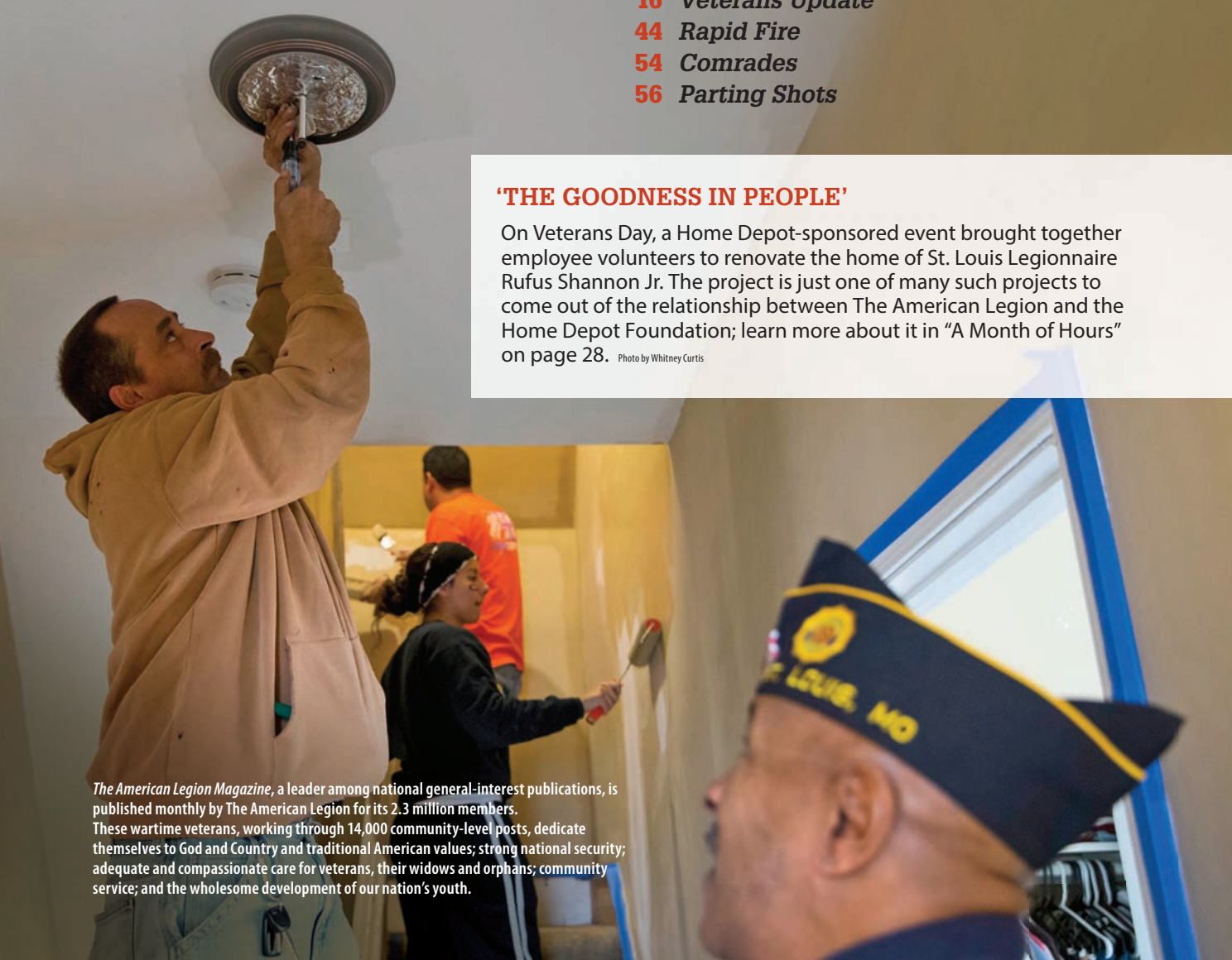
28 'A Month of Hours'
When a veteran couple fell on hard times, The American Legion and The Home Depot teamed up to help complete their home. *By Ken Olsen*

32 Casualties of Care
Inadequate staffing, surges in patient numbers and bureaucratic cover-ups led to near misses and unnecessary deaths at VA medical centers. *By Ken Olsen*

38 The Battle Remembered
Seventy years after the cold, snowy, bloody fight that led to victory in World War II, Bulge veterans continue to find each other. *By Henry Howard*

42 The Music of Military Service
Operation Encore blends the songwriting and playing talents of men and women who know the deeper meaning of service. *By Andy Romey*

5 *Vet Voice*
8 *Commander's Message*
10 *I Am The American Legion*
12 *Big Issues*
14 *Living Well*
16 *Veterans Update*
44 *Rapid Fire*
54 *Comrades*
56 *Parting Shots*



'THE GOODNESS IN PEOPLE'

On Veterans Day, a Home Depot-sponsored event brought together employee volunteers to renovate the home of St. Louis Legionnaire Rufus Shannon Jr. The project is just one of many such projects to come out of the relationship between The American Legion and the Home Depot Foundation; learn more about it in "A Month of Hours" on page 28. Photo by Whitney Curtis

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.3 million members.
These wartime veterans, working through 14,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

DIAGNOSED WITH MESOTHELIOMA?

As former sailors and Marines, we served together yesterday. As seasoned attorneys, my firm and I will fight for you today. Attorneys at Coady Law Firm have successfully represented veterans in mesothelioma claims nationwide for more than two decades. We've helped veterans understand their rights—and secured millions for their families in just compensation.

Trust in the experience and commitment of a shipmate who served with you. Contact the Coady Law Firm. Receive a ***FREE***, no-obligation consultation.

Bud Coady
Harvard, 1979
USMC, 1979-89, 1991
Gulf War Veteran

Attorney at Law

$30 Billion

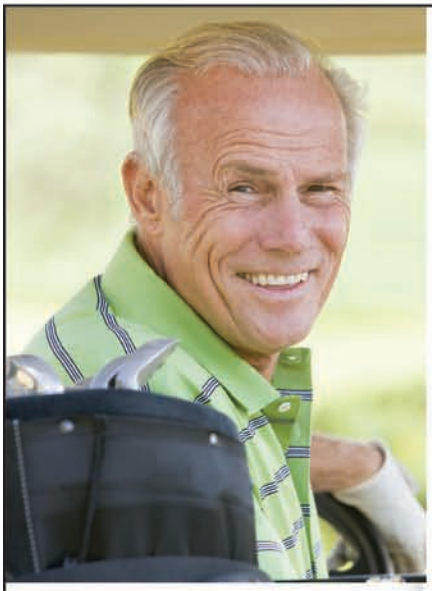
FROM U.S. COMPENSATION TRUST FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR VETERANS WHO QUALIFY

Call 1-888-802-MESO (6376)

TO DETERMINE YOUR ELIGIBILITY.

205 Portland Street • Boston, MA 02114 • Web: www.coadylaw.com

COADY
LAW FIRM



What Adult Diaper Companies Don't Want Men To Know . . .

"Health risks and high out-of-pocket costs . . . men are unaware of Liberty's healthier alternative!"

"Men's Liberty is terrific. I can keep doing what I want to do, without having to worry about running to the bathroom or changing my clothes. It is a Godsend." - John in Michigan

MEN'S LIBERTY™
The Freedom to Live

Covered by Medicare!

Millions of men spend thousands of dollars each year on diapers, which are not covered by Medicare. These men are paying as much as $300 out of pocket each month... Men's Liberty is covered by Medicare, most state Medicaids, VA/Tricare and most private insurance plans.

Ask if you qualify to receive Men's Liberty. We handle all claims and billing to Medicare and your Insurance provider.

The Diaper Dilemma

Urinary incontinence affects more than 4 million men in the United States of all ages. Diapers trap moisture, causing UTIs, discomfort and injury rates up to 38%.

Men's Liberty Alternative

There has not been a confirmed UTI or serious skin injury caused by Men's Liberty, after **more than one million sold**. This is a non-invasive, external product that allows men to improve their lifestyle at work and quality of time with family.

CALL TODAY!
1-800-814-3259

PROMO CODE AML0115

Hablamos Español

MEN'S LIBERTY™
The Freedom to Live

www.MensLiberty.com

THE AMERICAN Legion MAGAZINE

NATIONAL COMMANDER	**Michael D. Helm**
PUBLISHER	The American Legion
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Jeffrey O. Brown
EDITOR	Jeff Stoffer
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MAGAZINE OPERATIONS	Henry Howard
MANAGING EDITOR	Matt Grills
ASSOCIATE EDITOR	Laura Edwards
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Julie Campbell
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR	Steve Brooks
DISPATCH EDITOR	Cameran Richardson
ASSISTANT WEB EDITOR	Andrew Romey
BURNPIT EDITOR	Mark Seavey
VISUAL TEAM MANAGER	Holly K. Soria
MEDIA DESIGN SPECIALIST	Celesta Török-Lee
VISUAL MEDIA SPECIALIST	Lucas Carter
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Tony Heath
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR	Alan W. Dowd

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

CHAIRMAN	Benedict A. Lee, *Calabash, N.C.*
VICE CHAIRMAN	James C. Morris, *Cardington, Ohio*
COMMANDER'S REPRESENTATIVE	Terry D. Lewis, *Philadelphia*
CONSULTANTS	Jerilyn Strande, *Cottonwood, Ariz.* Rodger A. Bennett, *Thawville, Ill.* Albert W. Coughlin, *Park Ridge, Ill.* Robert A. Corrigan, *Bronx, N.Y.*
MEMBERS	Roger H. Anderson, *South Windsor, Conn.* Richard A. Baxter, *Palisade, Neb.* Henry P. Bradley, *North Quincy, Mass.* Fae Casper, *Douglasville, Ga.* Thomas A. Fernlund, *St. Cloud, Minn.* John J. Gasper, *Archbald, Pa.* Paul L. Greer, *Leesville, La.* James H. Hall, *Hopewell, N.J.* Robert W. Hensley, *Mountain City, Tenn.* James Huls, *Madison, S.D.* Paul M. Kennedy, *Pittsburgh* Doug Malin, *West Haverstraw, N.Y.* Larry J. Marcouillier, *Harrington, Del.* Silas M. Noel, *Frankfort, Ky.* Willis J. Pritchard, *Oakes, N.D.* Marvin C. Rodney, *Alexandria, Va.* Shelli Romeu, *Tampa, Fla.* David E. Shafer, *Dixon, Mo.* David L. Sharber, *Mount Vernon, Ind.* Terri L. Shelefontiuk, *Lakewood, Colo.* George J. Sinkewitz, *Huntington, W.Va.* Jerry J. Smith, *Trussville, Ala.* Edwin R. Strain, *Heber Springs, Ark.* Frank C. Ward, *Greer, S.C.* Danny K. Wiley, *Leavenworth, Kan.*
NEC LIAISON COMMITTEE	Randall Coffman *Chairman, Russellville, Ky.* Hugh E. Crooks, Jr., *Los Angeles* Charles W. Goodin, *Jefferson City, Mo.* John W. Hargraves, *Farmingdale, Maine* Steven M. Jimmo, *Chicopee, Mass.* Mickey C. Taylor, *Myrtle Beach, S.C.*

ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR	Diane Andretti
ASSISTANT ADVERTISING MANAGER	Chris Elliot
CONTACT	The American Legion Magazine P.O. Box 7068 Indianapolis, IN 46207
ADVERTISING SALES	James G. Elliott Company, Inc.
NEW YORK	(212) 588-9200
DETROIT	(248) 530-0300
CHICAGO	(312) 236-4900
LOS ANGELES	(213) 624-0900

Copyright 2015 by The American Legion

The American Legion (ISSN 0886-1234) is published monthly by The American Legion, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216. Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis, IN 46204 and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The American Legion, Data Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

Canada Post International Publications Mail *(Canadian Distribution)* Sales Agreement No. PM40063731. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Station A, P.O. Box, Windsor ON N9A 6J5. Re-entered second-class mail matter at Manila Central Post Office dated Dec. 22, 1991.

Printed in USA
Member Audit Bureau of Circulations

The Magazine for a Strong America

HOW TO CONTACT US

ADDRESS CHANGES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

CUSTOMER SERVICE **(800) 433-3318**
cs@legion.org
The American Legion
Data Services
P.O. Box 1954
Indianapolis, IN 46206

For change of address by mail, attach old address label, provide new address and membership number.

ARTICLE PROPOSALS

MAGAZINE **(317) 630-1253**
pr@legion.org

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS **(317) 630-1200**
700 N. Pennsylvania St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

EMAIL magazine@legion.org

TELEPHONE (317) 630-1298

WEBSITE www.legion.org

SUBSCRIPTIONS Free with membership
Non-members: $15
Foreign: $21
Post-sponsored and widows: $6
Single copies: $3.50

MEMBERSHIP IN THE AMERICAN LEGION

Veterans who served at least one day of active military duty during wartime, or are serving now, are potentially eligible for membership in The American Legion. Members must have been honorably discharged or still serving honorably.

ELIGIBILITY DATES OF MILITARY SERVICE
Aug 2, 1990 – current
Dec. 20,1989 – Jan. 31, 1990
Aug. 24, 1982 – July 31, 1984
Feb. 28,1961 – May 7, 1975
June 25, 1950 – Jan. 31, 1955
Dec. 7, 1941 – Dec. 31, 1946
April 6, 1917 – Nov 11, 1918
(Merchant Marines who served from Dec. 7, 1941 to Dec. 31, 1946, are also eligible.)

TO JOIN Membership Division
ia@legion.org
(317) 630-1321
www.legion.org

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION (202) 861-2700
var@legion.org

ECONOMIC 202.861.2700
econ@legion.org

FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK (800) 504-4098
familysupport@legion.org

CITIZENS FLAG ALLIANCE (317) 630-1384
cfa@cfa-inc.org
www.legion.org/flag

LEGION RIDERS (317) 630-1265
www.legion.org/riders
legionriders@legion.org

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL (317) 630-1249
baseball@legion.org
www.legion.org/baseball

BOYS NATION (317) 630-1207
boysstate-nation@legion.org

JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS (317) 630-1249
juniorshooting@legion.org

NATIONAL ORATORICAL CONTEST (317) 630-1249
oratorical@legion.org

USAA (877) 699-2654
www.usaa.com/legion

BLOOD PROGRAM (202) 263-2993
www.legion.org/security/blood

SCHOLARSHIPS & CHARITABLE TRUSTS

AMERICAN LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP (317) 630-1212
scholarships@legion.org

AMERICAN LEGION ENDOWMENT FUND (317) 630-1202

CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION (317) 630-1202
www.cwf-inc.org

NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND (317) 630-1376
ia@legion.org

AMERICAN LEGION MERCHANDISE

ORDER PLACEMENT AND CATALOG REQUESTS (888) 453-4466
emblem.legion.org
emblem@legion.org

AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY (317) 569-4500
www.legion.org/auxiliary

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (317) 630-1200
www.legion.org/sons

'America's Most Beloved Veterans'

I was most gratified to learn the results of the "America's Most Beloved Veterans" poll (November). I voted for many in the top 25. For the most part, these were famous veterans, and I thank them for all they have done to preserve our freedom. Yet many of our other beloved veterans are not famous: the lonely soldier on a hilltop in Afghanistan; the Marine lying prone in a rice paddy in Vietnam; an airman away from his family at an airfield in World War II; a sailor working on an aircraft carrier in hostile waters; a Coast Guardsman in icy waters off our shores during and after 9/11; a soldier in the trenches of World War I; a disabled veteran in a VA hospital contending with his or her wounds. These, too, are our beloved veterans. God bless them all.

– Louis R.F. Preysz III, Lexington, Va.

Congratulations for the outstanding article. I appreciate the work and decisions that had to be made to recruit the best people to write brief profiles, often warts and all, of men willing to give their lives to protect America. President John F. Kennedy spoke for them all when he declared, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and success of liberty."

– Lew Yeager, Marietta, Ohio

As a member of the Legion and a veteran of the World War II Burma campaign, I want to thank you for the stories about America's most beloved veterans. The individual articles are beautifully written, honest depictions of each of them.

Might the other 75 veterans listed be featured in a future issue? I hope so.

– Clarke K. Oler, Pasadena, Calif.

Audie Murphy was my first hero. My dad (World War II Navy) took my mom (also World War II Navy) and me to see "To Hell and Back" at a little theater in Morrisville, N.Y., in '56 or '57. I was blown away. Recently, I went to Arlington and saw where he is interred; it took me back to my childhood with a smile. Maybe he was my only hero ... could still be.

– Michael McCabe, Chittenango, N.Y.

Maj. Richard Bong should have been equal to Audie Murphy, but the article was on the "most beloved" by vote. Bong destroyed at least 38 enemy planes by official record, probably 10 or more when he was officially ordered to avoid combat; he was the top ace of World War II and received the Medal of Honor. Unfortunately, this article shows that voters do not know of Bong. He would have wanted it that way; he is also ignored in articles on the South Pacific in World War II.

– Ronald Harris, La Crosse, Wis.

Ask any "Coastie," E-1 to O-10, who the Coast Guard's sole Medal of Honor recipient is and they will not hesitate to tell you: Douglas Munro of World War II. USCG cutters, buildings, halls, memorials and annual achievement awards are named in his honor.

– Robert McFarland, Redmond, Wash.

I read your list of America's 100 most beloved veterans and wondered if one was left out. Of course, the reason why he was left out is that he didn't do what we expect our "war heroes" to do: kill the enemy or save Americans from being killed. But what happens when someone openly questions the motives of a fellow senior officer, is vilified by Congress and some other Americans, and is now considered a hero to the Vietnamese people? I am talking about Warrant Officer Hugh Thompson Jr., the man who stopped the My Lai massacre. If there was ever a great American hero, I think he deserves mention.

– Jeff Keup, San Diego

I grew up in Indiana, Pa., and Jimmy Stewart was my dad's second cousin. Stewart retired as a brigadier general, not a major general, in the Air Force Reserve. During the 1980 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan kept saying Jimmy was a major general. Finally, after being corrected, he asked Jimmy why he had not said anything. Jimmy said, "Well, Ron, it just sounded too good to correct you."

– Gerald H. Wetzel, Butler, Pa.

I am a World War II Navy veteran who served in the Pacific in 1945 and 1946. Presently I am a volunteer docent, conducting tours through the Pacific Combat Zone section of the National Museum of the Pacific War/ Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas, Nimitz's birthplace and boyhood home.

I am greatly disappointed that Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz was not on your list of America's most beloved veterans. Certainly, if Gen. Douglas MacArthur, who was fired by President Harry Truman for insubordination, could be included, there should have been room for Nimitz, who played a major role in our victory in the Pacific.

– P.B. Snyder, Boerne, Texas

In your list of beloved veterans, you placed quotation marks around the middle name of William Tecumseh Sherman. This is an error. The future general was given the name of the great Indian chief at birth; it was not a nickname.

– Jewell G. Dyer, Lawrenceville, Ga.

I found it offensive that you count among "America's Most Beloved Veterans" Robert E. Lee and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, who were leaders in the Confederacy, whose avowed purpose was to destroy the union of the United States of America. Their generalship and accomplishments on the battlefield are well documented in Civil War accounts, but I don't find them American heroes, let alone beloved veterans.

– Paul R. Taylor, Centennial, Colo.

VA's best medicine

I have been searching for an article explaining that Congress has passed a law including the specific ability of the department to fire a VA "senior executive" (Commander's Message, November). Think about that.

I guess that "senior executives" accountable for the failure of VA hospitals to meet the needs of veterans were beyond ordinary employment practices – i.e, if you are not doing your job you can or will be fired, or at least demoted. I hope a future issue will report on the progress of the hospitals caring for the medical needs of veterans. Will anyone be fired or even demoted with a cut in pay?

– Bruce Barton, Dallas

I must take exception to the article by Tom Philpott (Veterans Update, October), which states that VA is limited to provide "no more than $40 million a year in executive bonuses through 2024." These "executives" took a job at a given salary, and someone hired them at that salary to do a job. Why should they get a bonus for doing the job they were hired and paid a fair salary for?

VA isn't a corporation in which workers or executives share the profits. That $40 million – which, by the way, is taxpayers' money – would go a long way toward funding more doctors or helping more veterans get the care they need. Care that is predicated by injuries sustained during their service to America.

– Earlon Beale, American Legion National Executive Committeeman, Laconia, N.H.

***THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE* WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS**

Include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters published are subject to editing. Due to the volume of mail received, not every letter can be acknowledged.
The American Legion Magazine, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206
magazine@legion.org

Complete Cent Design Set

ONLY $2.95!

spans 150 years!

1860-to-date Cent Design Set:

Indian Head Cent – century-old bronze classic of 1860-1909!

Lincoln Wheat Cent – original Lincoln cent reverse of 1909-1958

1943 Reprocessed Steel Cent – struck one year only during WWII

Lincoln Memorial Cent – minted from 1959-2008 & now obsolete!

100th Anniversary Set – one-year-only 2009 designs honoring 4 stages in Abraham Lincoln's life

2010 Union Shield Design – first year of new continuing reverse!

©2014 LCC, LLC

Get a 9-Coin Collectors Set Today...

Celebrate coinage history with a fascinating 9-coin set containing one of each U.S. cent design from 1860 to date. Enjoy hard-to-find older coins, special 100th anniversary Lincolns and first cent with the new Union Shield design!

SAVE 75% plus FREE Shipping!

Get this historic 9-coin set today for only $2.95 and **SAVE 75% off** the regular price of ~~$12.00~~, plus Free Shipping. Order by deadline and also get Littleton's exclusive *Collectors Guide to Lincoln Head Cents* – **FREE!**

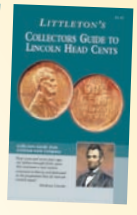
You'll also receive our fully illustrated catalog, plus other fascinating selections from our Free Examination Coins-on-Approval Service, from which you may purchase any or none of the coins – return balance in 15 days – with option to cancel at any time.

Mail coupon today or order online at: www.LittletonCoin.com/specials

FREE Gift!

when you order by deadline

Get Littleton's full-color ***Collectors Guide to Lincoln Head Cents*** absolutely **FREE!**



45-Day Money Back Guarantee of Satisfaction

You must be completely satisfied with every purchase you make from Littleton. If not, simply return it within 45 days in unaltered condition for a prompt exchange or refund, whichever you prefer.

YES! Please send me the 9-Coin Cent Design Set for ONLY $2.95 – regularly ~~$12.00~~, plus Free Shipping (limit 5 sets). Also send my **FREE** *Collectors Guide to Lincoln Head Cents* (one per customer, please).

Method of payment:

❑ Check or Money Order payable to Littleton Coin Co. ❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ American Express ❑ Discover Network

Card No. _____ Exp. Date_____/_____

Name _____
Please print your complete name and address clearly

Address _____ Apt# _____

City _____ State____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Special Offer for New Customers Only

Order Deadline: 12:00 Midnight, January 31, 2015

How Many Sets (limit 5): _____

Total Cost at $2.95 per set: $_____

Add Custom Cent Display Folders and SAVE 28% at $2.50 each (regularly ~~$3.49~~): $_____

Shipping & Handling: $ **FREE!**

Total Amount: $_____

Please send coupon to:

Littleton Coin Company®

Dept. 2KH423
1309 Mt. Eustis Road
Littleton NH 03561-3737

America's Favorite Coin Source
TRUSTED SINCE 1945

The road to restored trust with VA

Henry Ford once said, "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself."

That's how I look at The American Legion's relationship with the Department of Veterans Affairs. We are stakeholders, watchdogs, advocates, patients, partners, volunteers, and, when necessary, critics. Our loyalty is to veterans first, and our obligation is to ensure that the federal government is fulfilling its duty to help them.

When the full extent of the VA scandals was revealed last spring, the Legion called for changes in top leadership and for needed reforms. We persuaded Congress and the White House to take urgent action or jeopardize a hard-won and fragile trust with America's veterans.

As hard as the Legion has worked, the systemic problem caused by massive backlogs, cooked books and substandard care cannot be solved overnight. That is why I am so proud of the success we have seen at our Veterans Crisis Command Centers (VCCCs), which were recently renamed Veterans Benefits Centers (VBCs).

The Legion's initial crisis center opened June 9 in Phoenix, the epicenter of the VA scandals. Legion experts gathered at Post 1 and assisted nearly 600 veterans with system enrollment, outpatient appointments, benefit applications and appeals representation. The results over the five-day event were astounding.

Four veterans were granted 100 percent service-connected disability ratings on the spot, and one terminally ill veteran received a Chapter 35 benefit that will help his dependents pay for college. Another veteran – helped by the Legion – discovered he was eligible for $60,000 in retroactive disability compensation.

Similar results followed at VCCCs in other communities, including Fayetteville, N.C.; El Paso, Texas; Fort Collins, Colo.; St. Louis; Baltimore; Shinnston, W.Va.; Charlotte, N.C.; Honolulu; Harlingen, Texas; and White City and Medford, Ore.

By the end of September, the Legion had helped more than 3,000 veterans at these events and obtained nearly $1 million in on-the-spot retroactive benefits. In just a short period of time, these events have produced life-changing results for thousands.

Our work in Washington is important, but local communities are where we witness firsthand the fruits of our efforts.

Ralph Bozella, chairman of The American Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, recently explained the evolution of the Veterans Crisis Command Centers to Veterans Benefits Centers this way: "By its very nature, a crisis can't last forever. If it does, what's the end result? A crisis has to end, and the scandal that took place from the spring up until late summer is over. But we've learned so much from that. We want to continue to offer the service to veterans because of the environment we create: the environment of friendliness, the environment that we are here, in fact, to help. We cannot do it alone. We have to work together."

I couldn't agree more.

National Commander Michael D. Helm

MEMORANDA

BASEBALL REGISTRATION

Administrators can register for the 2015 American Legion Baseball season beginning Jan. 1. Registration is required for all participating teams.

www.legion.org/baseball

FOUR CHAPLAINS SUNDAY

The first Sunday in February is Four Chaplains Sunday, and Legion posts are encouraged to conduct memorial events to mark the anniversary of the sinking of USAT *Dorchester* by a U-boat in the North Atlantic on Feb. 3, 1943. Among the 672 men who died were four Army chaplains who gave their lifejackets to others, sacrificing their own chances at safety, and who have since lived in American memory.

www.fourchaplains.org

NEW LEGION CAREER CENTER

The new American Legion Career Center features job openings for veterans and their families, searchable by ZIP code and by profession, along with other online tools. The job search module is powered by Military.com.

www.legion.org/careers

Advertisement

Analog and digital display

Stop watch function

Built-in alarm

LCD complications

Electro-luminescence backlight

Suggested Retail $395... NOW, on your wrist for $29.95 For a limited Time Only

Amazing New Hybrid Runs Without Gas

The new face of time? Stauer's Compendium Hybrid fuses form and functionality for UNDER $30! Read on...

Innovation is the path to the future. Stauer takes that seriously. That's why we developed the ***Compendium Hybrid***, a stunningly-designed hybrid chronograph with over one dozen analog and digital functions that is more versatile than any watch that we have ever engineered.

New technology usually starts out at astronomical prices and then comes down years later. We skipped that step to allow everyone the chance to experience this watch's brilliant fusion of technology and style. We originally priced the Stauer ***Compendium Hybrid*** at $395 based on the market for advanced sports watches... but then stopped ourselves. Since this is no ordinary economy, we decided to offer the ***Compendium Hybrid*** at 92% off. That means this new technological marvel can be yours for only $29.95!

Welcome a new Digital Revolution. With the release of the dynamic new ***Compendium***, those boxy, plastic wrist calculators of the past have been replaced by this luxurious LCD chronograph that is sophisticated enough for a formal evening out, but rugged and tough enough to feel at home in a cockpit, camping expedition or covert mission.

The watch's extraordinary dial seamlessly blends an analog watch face with a stylish digital display. Three super-bright luminous hands keep time along the inner dial, while a trio of circular LCD windows track the hour, minutes and seconds. An eye-catching digital semi-circle animates in time with the second hand and shows the day of the week. The watch also features a rotating bezel, stopwatch and alarm functions and green electro-luminescence backlight. The ***Compendium Hybrid*** secures with a rugged stainless steel band and is water-resistant to 3 ATM.

The* Compendium: *The spectacular face of the latest watch technology.

Guaranteed to change the way you look at time. At Stauer, we believe that when faced with an uphill economy, innovation and better value will always provide a much-needed boost. Stauer is so confident of their latest hybrid timepiece that we offer a money-back-guarantee. If for any reason you aren't fully impressed by the performance and innovation of the Stauer ***Compendium Hybrid*** for $29.95, simply return the watch within 30 days for a full refund of the purchase price. The unique design of the ***Compendium*** greatly limits our production, so don't hesitate to order! Remember: progress and innovation wait for no one!

WATCH SPECS:

- Three LCD windows show hour, minute and second
- Stop watch function - Fits 6 3/4"–8 3/4" wrist
- 2 year warranty on movement

Offer Limited to First 2500 Respondents

92% OFF

Stauer *Compendium Hybrid Watch*—~~$395~~

Now* $29.95** +S&P ***Save over $365

Other discounts and coupons do not apply to this exclusive offer.

Call now to take advantage of this limited offer.

1-888-324-4370

Promotional Code VHW649-06
Please mention this code when you call.

Stauer®
14101 Southcross Drive W.,
Dept. VHW649-06
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.stauer.com

Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices™

"If it deals with students and young people, the Legion is right there to help."

BILL BARKER

Bill Barker's interest in shooting led him to The American Legion's Junior Shooting Sports Program (JSSP) in the early 1990s. His dedication to young people has kept him involved ever since.

Barker, the JSSP chairman for the Department of New Mexico, happened upon the program nearly 20 years ago. As he's taught numerous young shooters the values of discipline and focus, JSSP has become his passion.

"Marksmanship has had a positive impact on lots of young people," he says. "I've had young people who have had behavioral problems in classes and were constantly suspended from school and had bad grades. I'd just say, 'Get over there on that line and start practicing.'"

BRANCH OF SERVICE
Marine Corps (1965, 1971-1990), Marine Corps Reserve (1965-1971)

MOS Infantry

RANK Major

POST Post 49, Albuquerque, N.M.

YEARS IN THE LEGION 24

LEGION OFFICES

- Department of New Mexico JSSP chairman
- National JSSP staff member
- Post commander (2013-2014)
- Post chaplain

Watch an interview with Bill Barker online:
www.legion.org/magazine

Photo by Lucas Carter

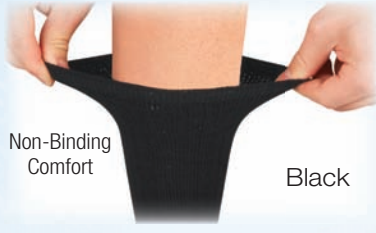
EXTREME WEATHER Thermal Socks

EXTREME PROTECTION

In Sub-Zero Temperatures

Keep Feet Warm In Extreme Cold

Merino wool has naturally efficient thermo-insulating heat retention qualities that make it sought after the world over for the creation of winter wear, designed for extreme cold weather protection. Keeps the body's own heat close to the skin for ultimate thermal effect. Keeps feet & calf totally toasty warm, even in extreme temperatures to minus 5° Fahrenheit. Imported of Merino Wool, cotton, polyester & spandex. You get 2 pairs Gray or Black. Sock sizes 9-11 and 10-13.



Non-Binding Comfort

Black

Gray

GUARANTEED WARMTH
Extreme Exposure Rating Of
-5°F

Thermo-Insulation Technology Is The Secret!

Ultra-Efficient Merino Wool Retains Body Heat

Only $4.99 per pair
(sold only in set of 2)

SAVE $5
Off Original Price

FREE SHIPPING & HANDLING
when buying 2 or more

Dept. 69894 © 2014 Dream Products, Inc. (Price valid for 1 yr.)

www.DreamProducts.com
website offers may vary

1-800-530-2689
Order Now Toll-Free

Receive A Free Surprise Gift with every order

Satisfaction Guaranteed or Return For Your Money Back

EXTREME WEATHER Thermal Socks Indicate Quantity Under Size & Color			
#83372 2 PR. GRAY Sz 9-11 ____	#83373 2 PR. GRAY Sz 10-13 ____	#83374 2 PR. BLACK Sz 9-11 ____	#83375 2 PR. BLACK Sz 10-13 ____

____Sets Of 2 Pair Of Socks @ $9.98	$
CA residents must add 7.5% sales tax	$
Add $4.95 Regular Shipping & Handling 1st set of 2 pairs **FREE** Shipping & Handling when buying 2 or more sets of 2 pairs!	$
❑ **FOR EXPEDITED SHIPPING** *(optional)* **Add An Additional $2.95** (receive your order 5-7 days from shipment)	$ 2.95
Please Print Clearly **TOTAL**	$

Check or money order **payable** to: **Dream Products, Inc.**
Send Order To: 412 Dream Lane, Van Nuys, CA 91496

❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover®/NOVUS℠Cards

Dept. 69894 Card# Exp. Date ___/___

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST ____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone # _____

Email Address _____

Sue the president over executive orders

SUPPORT

Rep. Pete Sessions, R-Texas

■ Sessions is chairman of the House Rules Committee.

When the founders wrote the Constitution, they separated the power to write the law from the power to execute the law in order to protect the liberties of the American people. They knew that putting too much power in a single branch of government could lead to tyranny. Unfortunately, President Barack Obama has gone beyond his power to enforce the law and infringed upon the power of Congress to write the law. This unilateral governance must be stopped.

Rather than faithfully executing the law, the president has selectively enforced it in some instances, ignored it in others and changed statutes altogether. Specifically, he has waived work requirements for welfare recipients, unilaterally changed immigration laws and ignored the statutory requirements of the Affordable Care Act. Branches of government have always attempted to exert their influence on the other branches, but this president has gone too far.

When the executive branch goes beyond the constraints of the Constitution, it is important that the judiciary defend the Constitution. In July, the House passed a resolution authorizing Speaker John Boehner to sue the president on behalf of the House of Representatives for failing to faithfully execute the law as written. It is my belief that this lawsuit is the best way to rebalance the separation of powers and defend the Constitution.

Any person who believes in our system of government should be worried about the president's executive overreach. This president, as well as future presidents from both parties, must not be allowed to ignore the Constitution and circumvent Congress. Through this lawsuit, the House of Representatives will take a crucial step in reining in the president and defending our Constitution so that it endures for generations to come.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

A proposed House lawsuit accuses the president of exceeding his constitutional authority. Opponents call it a political stunt to stop him from using executive orders to solve problems.

OPPOSE

Rep. Karen Bass, D-Calif.

■ Bass is a member of the House Judiciary Committee.

The American people deserve a Congress that works for them and is not engaged in political stunts with six-figure price tags.

Speaker Boehner's decision to sue President Obama is simply a bad idea that does not serve a purpose except to provide a no-bid contract to Washington lawyers.

I joined my Democratic colleagues in opposing the unnecessary lawsuit because it does not make sense to sue the president for doing the same thing that President George W. Bush did during implementation of the Medicare Expansion Program.

In May 2006, as open enrollment in the new Medicare program was coming to an end, Bush used his authority to waive penalty fees "for very low-income seniors and people with disabilities who sign up late" and allowed "the same impoverished beneficiaries to sign up for Medicare drug coverage until Dec. 31."

Serving in Congress at the time, Rep. John Boehner did not comment on President Bush's actions. Fast-forward eight years. President Obama used the same authority as President Bush. Only the party has changed.

Congress needs to give its attention to improving the lives of Americans, not funding political stunts. Instead of suing the president, Speaker Boehner should work with him to pass the American Jobs Act, which will provide tax credits to encourage businesses to hire unemployed veterans and make immediate investments in our nation's aging infrastructure – modernizing our roads, railways, bridges and airports while putting hundreds of thousands back to work.

My time serving in Congress is limited, and I would like to be remembered by what we accomplished – not how many lawsuits we filed.

CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Honorable *(name)*, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 • Phone: (202) 224-3121
The Honorable *(name)*, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 • Phone: (202) 225-3121

SPECIAL OFFER FOR VETERANS!

Safe Step Tubs have received the Ease-of-Use Commendation from the Arthritis Foundation

Financing available with approved credit

A Safe Step Walk-In Tub will offer independence to those seeking a safe and easy way to bathe right in the convenience and comfort of their own home. Constructed and built right here in America for safety and durability from the ground up, and with more standard features than any other tub.

- ✓ **Carefully engineered hydro-massage jets strategically places to target sore muscles and joints**
- ✓ **A NEW air system, *MicroSoothe*, oxygenates and softens skin while offering life-changing therapeutic benefits**
- ✓ **A NEW heated seat providing warmth from beginning to end**
- ✓ **The highest quality tub complete with the most comprehensive lifetime warranty on the entire tub**
- ✓ **Top-of-the-line installation and service, all included at one low, affordable price**

SAFE STEP® WALK-IN TUB CO.
www.SafeStepTub.com

You'll agree – there just isn't a better walk-in tub on the market.
So take your first step towards feeling great and stay in the home you love. **Give us a call today!**

For your FREE information kit and DVD, and our Senior Discounts, Call Today Toll-Free

1-800-969-9054

www.SafeStepTub.com

$750 OFF
when you mention this ad
for a limited time only
Call Toll-Free 1-800-969-9054

Coffee in your genes

A new study by the Harvard School of Public Health and Brigham and Women's Hospital sheds light on the individual genetic variants that make people react to coffee the way they do. More than 120,000 regular coffee drinkers participated in the study, and six new variants were discovered. Two relate to caffeine metabolism (on top of already discovered metabolic variants), two to how caffeine affects the brain and its perception of "rewards," and two to lipid and glucose metabolism. Those whose variants allow for more benefits from coffee may be predisposed to drink more of it.

In short, some people might be wired for getting wired.

Headache relief

According to *Pharmacy Times* and *U.S. News & World Report*, the following are pharmacists' top choices in over-the-counter headache relief medicines:

PRODUCT	PERCENTAGE OF PHARMACISTS WHO RECOMMEND IT
Advil	25
Tylenol	25
Excedrin	20
Motrin	16
Aleve	13

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

MUSCLE MEDICINE

BY LANCE FRAZER

Sarcopenia, a progressive muscle-wasting condition that can lead to a wide range of health problems, affects 50 million Americans. And unless you're one of the few who are less genetically predisposed to loss of muscle mass, there's no avoiding it. Even so, you can meet it head on.

Humans generally achieve their peak muscle mass by their late 30s to early 40s, after which there's usually a progressive deterioration of up to 1 percent annually. And losing muscle mass doesn't just mean we don't look quite as good at the beach, explains Mayo Clinic researcher Nathan LeBrasseur.

"There are four key roles of muscle in life," he says. "There's mobility and function. Muscle is also the primary area for storing sugar's energy and a primary determining factor for our metabolism. People with a healthy muscle mass can tolerate both physical and psychological stress better. And we're also beginning to look at muscle as another organ of the body that interacts with other organs such as the brain."

Why, then, do our bodies turn on themselves?

"It is strange," LeBrasseur admits. "But we have to recognize the facts of our evolution. From the beginning, it was all about getting us to reproductive age – a matter of survival of the species."

So it's inevitable? Yes and no, LeBrasseur says.

"You can take steps with both your diet and your lifestyle that will allow you to slow, and even reverse, the process," he says.

The first step? Get off the sofa. "Sitting is the new smoking," he says.

One of the best ways to stimulate muscle growth may be the one thing many of us tried to duck in PE class back in our school days: weight lifting. But you have to be smart about it, says Susan Kundrat, a clinical assistant professor and director of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's nutritional sciences program.

HOW TO MOVE

Here are a few exercise tips from T. Michael Harrington, chairman of the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Department of Family and Community Medicine, and Marcas Bamman, director of the UAB Center for Exercise Medicine:

- **The first six weeks of any training program aren't to get in shape but to train your body to do something new and different.**
- **Recognize that this is going to be a lifestyle change, not a six-month crash program.**

"Traditionally, I hear clients talking about muscle in terms of size, bulk and power," she says. "You know, how much can you lift in the weight room? But it's so much more than that. Stronger muscles (not necessarily related to size) can equate to better overall function through life."

Muscle is also a calorie-burning resource, a pound of which consumes seven to 10 calories per day (as opposed to two to three calories by a pound of fat). Recently, it's been noted that a higher muscle mass may correlate to a reduction in insulin resistance, meaning the body is managing the breakdown of blood sugar better, Kundrat says.

Exercise and diet need to go hand in hand. For example, spacing out meals and eating roughly similar amounts of protein at each meal – especially breakfast – can help (the accepted standard is 0.8 to 1.5 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight daily). And taking in a mix of protein and carbohydrates after exercise is also helpful for muscle recovery.

Jasminka Ilich-Ernst, professor of nutrition at Florida State University, says that while it's true that people tend to gain weight and lose both muscle mass and bone density with age, any substantial gain in body fat can make the problem worse.

"As people – particularly women – age, they lose muscle and bone but gain adipose tissue," she says. "The loss of muscle further slows metabolism and can lead to more increase in fat."

Fat infiltration into bone and muscle can damage both, and higher body fat secretes inflammatory substances that can cause a number of health problems.

Some help might be on the way. One study indicates that a supplement containing the amino acid arginine may be able to help trigger an increase in lean muscle mass, while another points a finger at the aging body's decreasing production of antioxidants. But these studies may be years away, if ever, from helpful results.

"If we want to be honest, optimizing the diet and exercising consistently in a way to maximize muscle mass are two of the best 'medicines' we have for lessening the effect of sarcopenia as we age," Kundrat says.

Lance Frazer is a California-based writer specializing in health and medicine, nature, science and the environment.

Media Bakery

- **Familiarize yourself with what you're doing, learn to do it properly and develop a fitness base before you move forward.**
- **Don't neglect your cardiovascular fitness (endurance); increasing endurance can boost the intensity and duration you're able to handle in strength training.**
- **Get a physical to eliminate any underlying problems that might preclude training, and start with an established program.**

Media Bakery

Smoking, diabetes linked to onset of dementia

The World Alzheimer Report 2014 concludes that diabetes can increase the risk of dementia by 50 percent, according to HealthDay. Managing diabetes, quitting smoking, controlling high blood pressure, exercising and maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk for dementia even late in life, the news service reports.

"While age and genetics are part of the disease's risk factors, not smoking, eating more healthily, getting some exercise and having a good education, coupled with challenging your brain to ensure it is kept active, can all play a part in minimizing your chances of developing dementia," says Graham Stokes, director of dementia care at Bupa, a global health-care group that serves some 22 million customers in 190 countries.

At last, Lejeune family coverage begins

BY TOM PHILPOTT

In late October, more than two years after Congress passed the Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act, VA began reimbursing family members for treatment of cancers and other ailments linked to contaminated drinking water at the sprawling Marine Corps base in North Carolina.

But as VA took its final steps to implement the complex 2012 law, more former Lejeune families were discovering how it created gaps in coverage between them.

The law makes VA responsible for medical care to veterans and family members who were at Lejeune for at least 30 days from January 1957 through December 1987, when drinking water was fouled by trichloroethylene, tetrachloroethylene and petroleum byproducts. Prolonged exposure to these can cause health problems.

A sign cautions visitors outside a pump-and-treat facility at Camp Lejeune, N.C., site of one of the nation's worst drinking water contaminations. AP

The law lists 15 conditions VA is responsible for treating in Lejeune families: cancer of the lung, esophagus, breast, bladder or kidney; leukemia; multiple myeloma; myelodysplastic syndromes; renal toxicity; hepatic steatosis; female infertility; miscarriage; scleroderma; neurobehavioral effects; and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

VA began providing health care to former Lejeune veterans the day the law was signed on Aug. 6, 2012, said Terry Walters, deputy chief consultant for post-deployment health for VA's Office of Public Health. She also pointed out that the law grants these veterans access to VA health care even if they aren't diagnosed with one of the 15 conditions.

Through Sept. 30, 2014, 16,320 Lejeune veterans had applied for VA health care citing the law, but only 1,231 had one of the toxin-related conditions.

The law is more limiting for family members at Lejeune during that 31-year period. VA doesn't have to provide them with medical care, but it must cover any out-of-pocket costs family members face for treatment of any of the 15 conditions.

The law makes VA second payer to other health insurance families have. VA will also make retroactive payments for such care, but only back to March 26, 2013, the date an appropriations bill to fund the 2012 law was enacted.

Family members can apply for coverage online at **www.clfamilymembers.fsc.va.gov**. They can also print out a form for their clinicians to fill out documenting that they have one of the conditions.

When family members get cards explaining that they are in the program, they will be able to send VA their medical bills. "We will medically review these bills to ascertain they are associated with one of these 15 conditions, and then pay their out-of-pocket costs," Walters said.

Lejeune veterans having out-of-pocket health-care costs for any of the 15 conditions are not eligible for retroactive reimbursement, as the law assumes VA provided for their care back to August 2012.

Walters said VA needed two years to start family coverage because the agency had to create a supplemental health insurance plan by writing rules, hiring clinical care reviewers, creating computer programs and billing mechanisms, and developing a way to transmit medical records from civilian doctors to VA, where treatment costs are verified and reimbursed.

The 2012 law covers medical costs but doesn't compensate Lejeune families for deaths or illnesses possibly tied to the water they drank and bathed in. For many families, that's the law's greatest flaw.

And there are other coverage gaps families are discovering, Walters said. The law provides no health benefits to reservists who might have trained at Lejeune but lack official veteran status, which the law requires, because they were never called to active duty for at least 180 days. It also doesn't help former civilian employees if they now have one or more of the 15 conditions and/or no health-care coverage.

"Did they drink the water? Yes, of course they did," Walters said.

A recent study by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry compared mortality rates of Lejeune civilians with their Camp Pendleton counterparts in that era. It found an elevated risk of death from some cancers among Lejeune employees.

Tom Philpott has been covering military personnel and veterans issues for more than 30 years.

HARBOR FREIGHT

QUALITY TOOLS AT RIDICULOUSLY LOW PRICES

How Does Harbor Freight Sell GREAT QUALITY Tools at the LOWEST Prices?

We have invested millions of dollars in our own state-of-the-art quality test labs and millions more in our factories, so our tools will go toe-to-toe with the top professional brands. And we can sell them for a fraction of the price because we cut out the middle man and pass the savings on to you. It's just that simple! Come visit one of our 550 Stores Nationwide.

SUPER COUPON

20% OFF

ANY SINGLE ITEM

LIMIT 1 - Save 20% on any one item purchased at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. *Cannot be used with other discount, coupon, gift cards, Inside Track Club membership, extended service plans or on any of the following: compressors, generators, tool storage or carts, welders, floor jacks, Towable Ride-On Trencher, Saw Mill (Item 61712/62366/67138), Predator Gas Power Items, open box items, in-store event or parking lot sale items. Not valid on prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase date with original receipt. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

10428896

SUPER COUPON

FREE

WITH ANY PURCHASE

PITTSBURGH 1" x 25 FT. TAPE MEASURE

ITEM 69080 69030/69031

Item 69080 shown

$6.99 VALUE

LIMIT 1 - Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or prior purchase. Coupon good at our stores, HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Offer good while supplies last. Shipping & Handling charges may apply if not picked up in-store. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

10390038

SUPER COUPON

13 PIECE 1/2" DRIVE DEEP WALL IMPACT SOCKET SETS

SAVE 42%

Item 69560 shown

SAE	METRIC
LOT NO. 67903/69280 69333/69560	LOT NO. 67904/69279 69332/69561

PITTSBURGH

YOUR CHOICE!

$19.99

REG. PRICE $34.99

10452992

LIMIT 5 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

RAPID PUMP® 3 TON LOW PROFILE HEAVY DUTY STEEL FLOOR JACK

SAVE $90

LOT NO. 68049/62326 60688/61253 61282

Item 61253 shown

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

LOW PROFILE 2-3/4" High

29" Long

20"

$79.99

REG. PRICE $169.99

• Weighs 77 lbs.

10460130

LIMIT 3 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

"The Perfect Compressor with Powerful, Quiet and Consistent Airflow... Plus we Love the Low Price" – Street Trucks Magazine

2.5 HP, 21 GALLON 125 PSI VERTICAL AIR COMPRESSOR

SAVE $70

CENTRALPNEUMATIC

Item 67847 shown

LOT NO. 67847 61454/61693

$149.99

REG. PRICE $219.99

10495401

LIMIT 3 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER

drillmaster

LOT NO. 95578 69645/60625

Item 60625 shown

SAVE 50%

$9.99

REG. PRICE $19.99

10416419

LIMIT 8 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

NEW

"We Are Impressed With the Quality... The Price is Incredible" – Car Craft Magazine

SAVE $330

44", 13 DRAWER INDUSTRIAL QUALITY ROLLER CABINET

LOT NO. 68784 69387 62270

• 2633 lb. Capacity • Super High Gloss Finish
• Weighs 245 lbs.

Item 68784 shown

US★GENERAL PRO

$369.99

REG. PRICE $699.99

10436640

LIMIT 4 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

BADLAND

NEW

SAVE $100

2500 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL

Item 61258 shown

LOT NO. 68146/61258 61297/61840

$49.99

REG. PRICE $149.99

10457963

LIMIT 3 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

4-IN-1 JUMP STARTER WITH AIR COMPRESSOR

CENTECH

LOT NO. 60666 69401/62374/62453

Item 69401 shown

SAVE 25%

$59.99

REG. PRICE $79.99

10476286

LIMIT 5 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

CHICAGO ELECTRIC WELDING

MIG-FLUX WELDING CART

Welder and accessories sold separately.

SAVE 40%

LOT NO. 69340/60790 90305/61316

Item 69340 shown

$35.99

REG. PRICE $59.99

10495573

LIMIT 3 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

STORM CAT

NEW

SAVE $80

900 PEAK/ 700 RUNNING WATTS 2 HP (63 CC) 2 CYCLE GAS RECREATIONAL GENERATOR

LOT NO. 66619/60338 69381/62472

Item 69381 shown

$99.99 $129.99

REG. PRICE $179.99

10332885

LIMIT 4 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

HaulMaster

SAVE $130

1195 LB. CAPACITY 4 FT. x 8 FT. HEAVY DUTY FOLDABLE UTILITY TRAILER

Item 90154 shown

$269.99 $299.99

• DOT certified

LOT NO. 90154/62170

REG. PRICE $399.99

10422570

LIMIT 5 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES PACK OF 100

HARDY

Item 68498 shown

• 5 mil. thickness

YOUR CHOICE!

$6.49

REG. PRICE $11.99

SAVE 45%

MEDIUM LOT NO. 68496 61363/97581

LARGE LOT NO. 68497/61360

X-LARGE LOT NO. 68498/61359

10459141

LIMIT 8 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON

17 FT. TYPE 1A MULTI-TASK LADDER

Item 67646 shown

LOT NO. 67646 62514

• 300 lb. Capacity
• 23 Configurations

$119.99

REG. PRICE $199.99

SAVE $80

10494787

LIMIT 4 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/15/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

FIRST BLOOD

BY JOHN F. ROSS

Competition, controlled fears and a desperate craving for a shootdown put Eddie Rickenbacker on a path to become America's "ace of aces."

National Archives photo

The following is an excerpt from John F. Ross' book, "Enduring Courage: Ace Pilot Eddie Rickenbacker and the Dawn of the Age of Speed" (St. Martin's Press). Rickenbacker was a member of Aviators' Post 743 in New York and active in The American Legion.

ON MARCH 21, 1918, after a massive bombardment, including tens of thousands of canisters of poison gas, the Germans struck the British 5th Army hard along a 45-mile line from La Bassée to La Fère on the Somme in northern France. Foul weather prevented either side from getting aloft until March 24. By then, a German assault had driven the British back 14 miles in full retreat, which astounded them with its force and speed. For years, the front had changed yards at a time; now the storm troopers – a rather new but rapidly famous category of soldier – promised to blow open the salient they had created and altogether divide the French and British, threatening the critical railway hub of Amiens.

Into the first clear skies, the Germans and British put waves of aircraft over the Somme on a scale of aerial war never before seen. In one day, the British claimed 45 German aircraft while losing 11 of their own, 51 more being damaged beyond repair. Stiff British ground resistance to the German thrust, backed by fierce air support, kept Amiens just barely in Allied hands. Two days later, the Germans adopted a defensive air strategy, taking down 13 British planes without losing any.

At the Villeneuve aerodrome, Eddie Rickenbacker and the other pursuit pilots listened anxiously to reports of the offensive, worrying that their base, although well behind the front, might soon be overrun. Eddie calibrated his gunsights, writing on March 23 that German bombers had struck the nearby town of Châlons, "killing many also wrecking the depot." Bombers even passed over Villeneuve, "naturally we thot (sic) they would bomb us however they did not."

Ace pilot Raoul Lufbery decided his tyros needed combat vetting, even though machine guns for the Americans remained at a premium – instead of the stipulated two, the squadron could mount only one per Nieuport. He ran his young charges through one last vigorous acrobatic session, then tapped the two most promising, Eddie and Douglas Campbell, just out of Harvard, to join him over enemy lines the following morning. "Got the opportunity I have worked so hard for during the past 9 months," Eddie scribbled in his diary before trying to get some sleep.

Photographs of him and Campbell show the bright, knowing alpha smile – expressing, however, a confidence springing from very different sources. Eddie's face reflected the cheerful pessimism of a fighter permanently on the edge of being brushed off or rolled over, always aware that his greatest asset was his undismayed mistrust of the world. Campbell's shone from a bright star that seemed to guide his life, an effortless directing spirit manifest in his father and such institutions as Harvard, which bestowed a sense of entitlement and the certitude of success. Eddie's rock-hard determination and ambition were fueled by still-potent memories of childhood poverty and misfortune, and his father's angry fists. He had survived those challenges by drawing strength from within his bruised, ill-fed body. For Eddie, standing out and above others was no birthright but a necessity. Merely to be ordinary to him implied a dark, harsh obscurity, a life essentially not worth living.

Lufbery's experienced eye cared little about what spring had nourished his protégés' talents and determination, only that they could deploy the necessary raw materials. In Eddie and Campbell he detected a near-fanatical determination to be the best. Flying and shooting skills improved with practice, but nothing could create from scratch the composure necessary to thrive in the most stressful combat environment that humans had yet conceived. "Many fighter aces have been described as fearless; this is simply not true," writes one modern expert. "What they have to do is to control their fear, which demands a high degree of determination."

Dawn broke bright and clear over the Villeneuve aerodrome on Thursday, March 28, perfect flying weather for the 94th's first hostile sortie. The other fliers enviously ribbed the pair, "wondering what they would do with our equipment and personal effects, should we fail to come back," noted Eddie, without resentment. Such gallows humor would proliferate over the coming weeks, as one comrade after another failed to return. Eddie and Reed Chambers took to saluting one another before a mission with, "Well, I'll be slapping you in the face with a spade, you old so and so. I'll be burying you." Dragging on a cigarette, Eddie pulled on his bulky teddy-bear suit, his nerves on edge, then climbed aboard his Nieuport. Lufbery strolled over to speak with Campbell, then Eddie. As Eddie watched the supremely self-confident ace walk over, his apprehension swelled to fever pitch. Lufbery reminded him to stay close and not to break formation.

In the quiet morning, their engines generated a

blasting sound, akin to a modern jet engine's. Lufbery took off, closely followed by his novices, who banked with him north toward Reims. The Villeneuve aerodrome lay at the southern end of the small eminence known as the Mountain of Reims, a few miles south of the city, and Lufbery cleverly used its shadow to hide their approach from the vigilant German observers only 20 miles away.

Nothing prepared Eddie for the immense cruciform of Notre-Dame de Reims, thrown into crisp relief by the sharp early-morning sunlight. The world's largest and most imposing symbol of the Middle Ages, the great Gothic church had witnessed the coronations of 25 French kings from that of Louis VIII in 1223 to Charles X in 1825. Joan of Arc herself had traveled here in 1429; her visitation was commemorated by an equestrian statue with sword raised, which Eddie spotted near the cathedral in the Place Cardinal-Luçon. Her posture seemed to defy all those who should menace such a nobly historic town, but the Germans had, with a vengeance. Their swift August 1914 offensive had swept into Reims like a tide, which then rolled back before heroic resistance. The cathedral, which the Germans considered an appropriate target because of the observers sweeping the landscape from its 260-foot towers, felt war's inhuman blows. Wooden scaffolding caught fire, burning and melting the lead-and-wooden roof. As Eddie flew over it, he peered into the debris-strewn nave.

The flight turned toward Suippes, 25 miles southeast, Lufbery now beginning a gentle corkscrew motion, a technique of continuous "banking and turning from one side to the other, in order to see at all angles," as Campbell later explained. Lufbery was teaching them to overcome the multiple blind spots imposed by wings, tail, and fuselage (not to mention the absence of a rearview mirror) by rotating their vision so as to avoid surprise. Should some "Boche" jump them, such corkscrewing would make them the more difficult targets – hard-earned knowledge that the Royal Air Force ace Geoffrey Wellum echoed a generation later when he summed up his wisdom about combat flying. "Never, never fly straight and narrow for more than twenty seconds. If you do, you'll die."

As Eddie began weaving himself, the cold chilled him to the bone, and the stiff wind pitched and rolled his Nieuport like a small boat riding heavy swells. As he wondered how his leader could corkscrew so effortlessly, bile began to rise in his stomach. He had been concentrating so hard since leaving Reims that he hadn't looked over the side; now what he saw astounded him, "nothing below but these old battered ditches, earthworks, and billions of shell holes ... nothing but the chaos of ruin and desolation." He clenched his teeth against his nausea. It didn't help that the thin air left him gasping for breath, forcing him to inhale even more of the castor oil thrown off from the engine than usual.

Just then, an explosion directly behind him pitched his machine up, then dropped it. He fought to regain control as the aircraft pitched and rolled wildly in the concussive wake of antiaircraft fire. In the next moments, more shells exploded, hammering his ears; he jerked around in his seat to see five puffs of black smoke just below and behind. Typically fired from German Krupp 77 mm guns, the 15-pound shells with a 1,600-foot-per-second muzzle velocity could deliver jagged shrapnel anywhere up to 14,000 feet.

With each concussion, Eddie learned a little better how to meet the blunt upward force with a gentle counterpressure on the joystick. Excitement swept away his nausea, replacing terror with the elation of meeting and surviving his first test of combat.

By the time they touched down, both Campbell and Eddie felt deep satisfaction, their countenances reflecting the casual indifference that was Lufbery's own trademark. As the other pilots peppered them with questions, their mentor broke through to ask what aircraft they had noticed.

Both shook their heads. "Just what I expected," he grumbled. "They're all the same!" He then counted off a formation of SPADs that had passed 500 yards below them before they reached the front, and another group that had flown by them 15 minutes later. Four Albatroses had later come into his view two miles ahead, and another enemy two-seater much closer.

These revelations showed just how far these two cocky greenhorns were from gaining what Eddie would later call "the vision of the air." Lufbery was "the owner and manipulator of the best pair of eyes in existence," gushed Campbell in a letter home. The ability to register potential threats at great distance, while scanning three-dimensionally above, below, and behind oneself, marked a critical power of "situational awareness," the pilot's ability "to keep track of events and foresee occurrences in the fast-moving, dynamic scenario of air warfare," as one modern-day student of the subject has summarized it. As Lufbery spoke, a wave of almost debilitating doubt swept over Eddie as he contemplated whether his damaged right eye might prevent him from ever attaining such abilities.

Lufbery walked over to Eddie's machine, almost

Never Forget!

The "Brotherhood of Veterans" Ring

A bold tribute in stainless steel and black onyx honoring those who served

Honor with pride the courageous individuals who have answered their country's call over the years with the "*Brotherhood of Veterans" Ring*—a custom-crafted jewelry exclusive paying tribute to those who served and forged a bond that remains to this day.

A Masterful Achievement in Craftsmanship and Design

Crafted of solid stainless steel, as tough and durable as those who fought to protect our freedom, the "*Brotherhood of Veterans" Ring* features a stirring sculpted portrait of three vets against a genuine black onyx center stone. A dramatic motif of stars and stripes flanks each side of the band, and engraved inside are the meaningful words, "Pride and Brotherhood."

Exceptional Value ... Immeasurable Significance

The perfect way to show you "will never forget", or a great gift for the veteran in your life, this magnificent ring can be yours for just $99*, payable in four convenient installments of $24.75. To reserve a ring in your name, backed by our unconditional 120-day guarantee, send no money now. Just fill out and send in the coupon today. But hurry—this is a limited time offer!

Arrives in a custom presentation case with Certificate of Authenticity

Expertly crafted in veteran-tough solid stainless steel

★★★

Genuine black onyx center inlay featuring a dramatically detailed veterans sculpture

★★★

Engraved with the words "Pride and Brotherhood"

A FINE JEWELRY EXCLUSIVE

LIMITED TIME OFFER

Reservations will be accepted on a *first-come, first-served* basis. Please respond as soon as possible.

Shown actual size.

Your Complete Satisfaction Guaranteed

To assure a proper fit, a ring sizer will be sent to you after your reservation has been accepted.

RESERVATION APPLICATION

THE BRADFORD EXCHANGE JEWELRY

9345 Milwaukee Avenue · Niles, IL 60714-1393

YES. Please reserve the "*Brotherhood of Veterans" Ring* for me as described in this announcement.

Send no money now!

Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____
Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail (optional) _____

01-16443-001-E94901

*Plus $9.98 shipping and service per item. Please allow 4-6 weeks after initial payment for shipment. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

www.bradfordexchange.com/16443

©1984. VVMF and F.E. Hart.
All Rights Reserved. Used with permission.

©2013 BGE
01-16443-001-BIU

everyone at Villeneuve who could fly crowding around. "How much of that shrapnel did you get?" he asked. Eddie couldn't help but laugh nervously, wondering what he could possibly mean, until Lufbery poked his finger into one ragged hole in the Nieuport's tail, then into another in the wing, and pointed out "part of the shell [that] had gone thru the wings one piece just a short way from my head," Eddie wrote in his journal. The other pilots said that Eddie turned pale and stayed that way for half an hour.

Mechanics placed frayed inch squares of Irish linen over the bullet holes and painted them with aircraft dope, a plasticized lacquer. The planes themselves were ready to fly again within the hour. Although the physical scars had disappeared, the effect of that encounter on Eddie and Campbell remained vivid and permanent memories, searing, frequent reminders of the enemy's deadly intent. How these new pilots handled this recognition would affect their ability to survive and thrive in this new arena of war.

ON APRIL 7, the 94th moved to active duty at Gengault Aerodrome near the front at Toul. They were delighted by the cement buildings with rooms for two, and a separate building containing showers with quick-heating apparatus.

Now that the 94th was no longer a training unit, tradition required that it display a logo, as earlier chevaliers had flaunted coats of arms. The men liked the gesture of a boxer pitching his hat in the ring to show his readiness to fight.

Each pilot painted a top hat emblazoned with stars and stripes sailing through a circle on his fuselage. It wasn't elegant, but it did the trick.

Eddie spent April 12 painting the insignia on his Nieuport. Lufbery returned at noon "with another Hun to his credit," he recorded in his journal.

The next day, Eddie wrote that "we were a happy lot," the Operations Board listing "the first war-flight order ever given by an All-American Squadron Commander to All-American pilots." James Hall would lead the two-hour sortie with Eddie and Chambers behind him. Starting at 6 a.m., they would patrol the lines from Pont-à-Mousson to Saint-Mihiel at 16,000 feet.

Now Eddie had the chance to make his first official kill, an honor that he almost desperately craved. Others perhaps yearned for the accolades such a feat might bestow, the adulation due a hero. To Eddie, who resisted being defined by others, winning came as an extension of authority. Like the Duke of Wellington, who hated applause from his men because one day it might turn to jeering, Eddie knew that such glory can die and fade, while hard achievements – the track wins and speeds he had steadily run – would endure.

Peterson took over as flight commander for the sick Hall. Douglas Campbell, Alan Winslow, and Jimmy Meissner joined them for breakfast, all three on call during Eddie's sortie in case bombers or other intruders should threaten the aerodrome.

A heavy mist hung over the field, but the trio still took off promptly at 6 a.m. Peterson immediately turned back because of the weather, which should have cued Eddie and Chambers to do the same, as they had been instructed. Instead they continued to climb. Eddie wrote later that he believed Peterson was having mechanical troubles and the less experienced Chambers was following Eddie's lead. The truth was that Eddie was too excited to let a little weather stop their appointed patrol.

To imagine the geography that the pilots needed to memorize, visualize an inverted pyramid, Toul airfield at its bottommost point. The front ran along its inverted base from Pont-à-Mousson to the northeast of Toul, on the banks of the Moselle, to Saint-Mihiel to the northwest, on the Meuse.

From Saint-Mihiel, the front snaked north another 18 miles to Verdun. Twenty miles to the north of Pont-à-Mousson lay Metz, the hub of several German aerodromes.

The pair followed the Moselle and climbed high, only realizing that they had passed over enemy lines in the fog when antiaircraft fire lit up beneath them. Never having encountered Archies before, Chambers skittered so dangerously close that Eddie feared they would collide. Chambers finally regained control, and they made four round trips up and down the line without seeing any enemy aircraft.

As they turned home, low on gas, dread suddenly clenched Eddie's stomach when he realized that thick cloud cover now obscured the ground and all identifying features that could help them navigate home. Pushing down blind into the fog was extremely dangerous, the area being rife with hills and trees, but he had no alternative but to trust the notoriously fickle altimeter. Chambers peeled away, concerned that they might collide. He would have to make his own way home.

Eddie pushed his nose down and kept going until he broke clear only a few hundred feet above the ground. At that altitude Eddie couldn't discern the major landmarks, but he did remember the telltale Y where a railway divided between Épiez and Toul. To his relief and by a stroke of providence, he found this intersection and flew low toward Toul and then

NEW

"My friends all hate their cell phones… I love mine!" Here's why.

No Contract

Better Sound and Longer Battery Life

FREE Car Charger

Say good-bye to everything you hate about cell phones. Say hello to Jitterbug.

"Cell phones have gotten so small, I can barely dial mine." Not Jitterbug®, it features a larger keypad for easier dialing. It even has an oversized display so you can actually see it.

"I had to get my son to program it." Your Jitterbug set-up process is simple. We'll even pre-program it with your favorite numbers.

"I tried my sister's cell phone… I couldn't hear it." Jitterbug is designed with an improved speaker. There's an adjustable volume control, and Jitterbug is hearing-aid compatible.

"I don't need stock quotes, Internet sites or games on my phone, I just want to talk with my family and friends." Life is complicated enough… Jitterbug is simple.

"What if I don't remember a number?" Friendly, helpful Jitterbug operators are available 24 hours a day and will even greet you by name when you call.

"I'd like a cell phone to use in an emergency, but I don't want a high monthly bill." Jitterbug has a plan to fit your needs… and your budget.

"My cell phone company wants to lock me in on a two-year contract!" Not Jitterbug, there's no contract to sign and no penalty if you discontinue your service.

	Basic 14	Basic 19
Monthly Minutes	50	was ~~100~~ NOW 200
Monthly Rate	$14.99	$19.99
Operator Assistance	24/7	24/7
911 Access	FREE	FREE
Long Distance Calls	No add'l charge	No add'l charge
Voice Dial	FREE	FREE
Nationwide Coverage	YES	YES
Friendly Return Policy[1]	30 days	30 days

More minute plans available. Ask your Jitterbug expert for details.

"I'll be paying for minutes I'll never use!" Not with Jitterbug, unused minutes carry over to the next month, there's no roaming fee and no additional charge for long distance.

"My phone's battery only lasts a couple of days." The Jitterbug's battery lasts for up to 25 days on standby.

Enough talk. Isn't it time you found out more about the cell phone that's changing all the rules? Call now, Jitterbug product experts are standing by.

Available in Blue, Red (shown) and White.

Order now and receive a **FREE Car Charger** for your Jitterbug – a $24.99 value. Call now!

jitterbug5

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

100% U.S. Based Customer Service

NEW Jitterbug5 Cell Phone

Call toll free today to get your own Jitterbug5.

Please mention promotional code 48822.

1-877-545-6323

www.jitterbugdirect.com

We proudly accept the following credit cards.

47618

IMPORTANT CONSUMER INFORMATION: Jitterbug is owned by GreatCall, Inc. Your invoices will come from GreatCall. All rate plans and services require the purchase of a Jitterbug phone and a one-time set up fee of $35. Coverage and service is not available everywhere. Other charges and restrictions may apply. Screen images simulated. There are no additional fees to call Jitterbug's 24-hour U.S. Based Customer Service. However, for calls to an Operator in which a service is completed, minutes will be deducted from your monthly balance equal to the length of the call and any call connected by the Operator, plus an additional 5 minutes. Monthly minutes carry over and are available for 60 days. If you exceed the minute balance on your account, you will be billed at 35¢ for each minute used over the balance. Monthly rate plans do not include government taxes or assessment surcharges. Prices and fees subject to change. [1]We will refund the full price of the GreatCall phone and the activation fee (or set-up fee) if it is returned within 30 days of purchase in like-new condition. We will also refund your first monthly service charge if you have less than 30 minutes of usage. If you have more than 30 minutes of usage, a per minute charge of 35 cents will be deducted from your refund for each minute over 30 minutes. You will be charged a $10 restocking fee. The shipping charges are not refundable. Jitterbug and GreatCall are registered trademarks of GreatCall, Inc. Samsung is a registered trademark of Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. ©2014 Samsung Telecommunications America, LLC. ©2014 GreatCall, Inc. ©2014 by *first*STREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc.

on to Gengault. When he landed, the normally quiet Peterson justifiably called him a bloody fool for flying into such conditions. The real blow came when he added that Chambers had not yet arrived. Had Eddie led his best friend to his death?

After shaking off his teddy-bear suit, Eddie walked over to the Operation Room to begin his report. He thought it peculiar that Campbell, Alan Winslow, and Meissner were gone, the remains of a Russian Bank card game scattered on the table. Then Eddie heard the roar of two Nieuports taking off. Walking outside, he headed back to the field, then sprinted over to a private who was yelling and pointing to a fire and smoke. While he stared, he heard more shouts and twisted around to see a plane crash into the ground. As he ran over to one of the burning wrecks, he heard the br-rppp, br-rp of two Nieuports coming in to land. Crazy as it seemed, in the few short minutes that it took Eddie to get to the field, Campbell and Winslow had just scored America's first aerial kills.

In America's first dogfight with enemy aircraft, U.S. fliers Douglas Campbell and Alan Winslow shot down two German two-seaters, imaginatively depicted in this 1930s painting. Photo courtesy John F. Ross

The sound of Eddie's and Chambers' engines over the line had alerted the Germans. A Pfalz and an Albatros set off in hot pursuit, only to find themselves equally lost. An Allied antiaircraft battery crew heard them pass over Toul at 6,000 feet and alerted Gengault at 8:44 a.m. Winslow, a popular former Yale rower and editor of the college's *Sheffield Monthly* science journal, fielded the call, then raced out with Campbell and Meissner to their waiting planes. He yelled for them to meet him at 1,500 feet over the northeast corner of the field. Meissner's plane was being worked on. Campbell took off, followed by Winslow 45 seconds later.

Winslow had barely cleared the trees at the edge of the field when he spotted a German biplane bearing down on him from only a few hundred feet ahead. The Albatros D.V turned on one wing to avoid his fire, which it returned dangerously close to him. "I pulled my Nieuport sharply in a vertical climb, kicked over my right rudder, and went plunging down on his tail, spraying his wings and fuselage with a long rattling burst of fire. In another instant he dashed toward earth in an uncontrollable dive." Winslow watched his adversary crash and somersault some 300 feet from the airfield.

The airborne Campbell heard the machine guns and looked over to see the tracers "going toward an airplane which had black crosses on it." The moment when something so long dreamed of takes animated form often realizes itself rather calmly, indeed oddly. "I had never seen a German airplane before but that obviously was one." Campbell was turning to support Winslow when a stream of tracers zipped terrifyingly near from above and behind; he jerked the stick up to fire at the interloper, only for his machine to stall, dropping to within 100 feet of the ground before he recovered. Now behind and below his foe, he again pulled up his nose – this time more judiciously – and fired again. In moments he gained altitude on the diving Pfalz D. IIIa and maneuvered behind it. As Winslow roared up to help, Campbell set his enemy's fuselage ablaze. The Pfalz crashed behind the 94th's hangars.

Eventually the crowds dispersed and headed back to Toul. Only then did Eddie hear the welcome sound of Chambers' machine coming in. After they separated, Chambers had flown until he landed in a pasture just inside Allied lines, concerned that he would soon run out of fuel. French soldiers, who had never seen either a Nieuport or its American markings, immediately surrounded the downed craft with pointed rifles and marched him off to find an interpreter. By the time he scrounged up enough fuel and returned, he had missed all the excitement.

It was little consolation that their sortie had laid the groundwork for the dual victories. It had been the sound of their engines overhead that had sent the Germans planes aloft in the first place. Campbell's detailed letter home made no mention of Eddie's sortie. Somehow they both already knew that the other was the one to beat.

For the next two days, Eddie's diary, usually crammed full of his spidery cursive, is nearly blank. In the silence of those pages, one can hear Eddie girding for the next round, doubling his focus. If he

INCREDIBLE WARMTH! ADJUSTABLE COMFORT!

Best Friend
ADJUSTABLE SLIPPERS

(And A Great Low Price!)

only **$9.99** pair

was ~~$16.99~~

SAVE $7.00
off original price

Indoor/ Outdoor

PLUSH Fleece Warmth From Heel To Toes

EXTRA-LONG *MAGIC* TOUCH CLOSURE STRAP For A Perfect, Adjustable Fit!

Especially Recommended For
BUNIONS! ARTHRITIS! AND SORE FEET!

MEMORY FOAM INSOLES

Dept 70727 © 2014 Dream Products, Inc. (Prices valid for 1yr.)

www.DreamProducts.com web offers may vary **OR** ORDER NOW TOLL-FREE **1-800-530-2689**

Receive a FREE Surprise Gift With Every Order

Wear Them Indoors Or Outdoors!

Wide Feet? Sore Feet? Bunions? Arthritis? No problem. Simply adjust your own comfort for a perfect, custom-made fit! The secret is the extra-long, 6" magic touch closure strap that eliminates tightness and binding. Plush pile interior keeps feet toasty warm. Thick memory foam insoles cushion every step. Durable TPR soles protect against slipping, indoors and outdoors. Micro-suede upper for that soft suede feel! Special import value in sizes for ladies and men. Order now and save!

Satisfaction Guaranteed or Return For Your Money Back

Best Friend Adjustable Slippers				
LADIES' #418	S (5-6)	M (6½-7½)	L (8-9)	XL (9½-10½)
MEN'S #419	S (6-7)	M (7½-8½)	L (9-10)	XL (11-12)

____ Pr(s) Best Friend Adjustable Slippers @ $9.99 pr.	$
CA residents must add 7.5% sales tax	$
Add $3.95 Regular Shipping & Handling Per Pair	$
☐ **FOR EXPEDITED SHIPPING** *(optional)* **Add An Additional $2.95** (receive your order 5-7 days from shipment)	$ 2.95
Indicate Qty Under Style & Size — **TOTAL**	$

❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover®/NOVUS℠ Cards

Dept. 70727 Card# Exp. Date ___/___

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST____ Zip_____

Daytime Phone #_____

Email Address_____

Check or money order **payable** to: **Dream Products, Inc.**
Send Order To: 412 Dream Lane, Van Nuys, CA 91496

couldn't be first to down a German, then he could become the first to shoot down five and earn the title of America's first ace.

ON APRIL 27, Eddie and Hall were sitting in the ready room when word came in of an enemy two-seater flying south near Beaumont. They raced to their planes, the waiting mechanics swinging the propellers. A speck in the sky to the north had to be their quarry, but, maddeningly, they couldn't take off before the squadron's commanding officer gave the specific orders. He was nowhere to be found. Frantic that they'd lose their chance, Eddie flailed at Hall, who finally "gave the signal to the boys to pull the blocks from under the wheels, leaving the camp with me in close pursuit." Both were risking reprimand, but greater things awaited.

They headed toward Pont-à-Mousson, seeing an immense observation balloon like a dirty low-hanging cloud over the American lines. Catching sight of an aircraft heading toward them, Eddie assumed it to be their enemy.

Despite waggling his wings and waving madly, he failed to catch Hall's attention and so peeled off anyway, easily overtaking the intruder, maneuvering underneath its tail. Finally, heart racing, he had his chance, only to recognize, just as he started to pull the trigger, the French tricolor cockade-blue bull's-eye set in concentric circles of white, then red – and pulled away cursing. He had come far too close to shooting down a friendly.

He broke back west toward Saint-Mihiel to rejoin Hall, whom he found taunting an antiaircraft battery with a string of acrobatics. Concussive bursts rocked his dancing plane. Hall broke off his aerial nose-thumbing to take up with Eddie, now heading back toward Pont-à-Mousson. Shortly thereafter, they saw a real German; Hall signaled to Eddie to climb steeply westward so that they could position themselves between the enemy machine and the setting sun. Eddie followed. The Pfalz D.III, no blinder than they, climbed flat-out but was unable to match the Nieuports' ascent.

As Hall initiated the attack, Eddie took in the whole three-dimensional scene with a quiet clarity, maneuvering against the German's other flank to head off his escape. Their prey hurriedly banked right and then dove "like a scared rabbit" for home, Eddie and Hall now on his tail. In the excitement, Eddie completely forgot to use his gunsight, aiming entirely by the flash of his tracers. They pressed the Pfalz to 2,000 feet, at which point they finally saw it lose control and crash at the edge of some woods a mile inside enemy lines. Back at Gengault, "we jumped out quite happy with glad hands for each other and we were amazed to see the personnel of our Squadron, with their hats and coats off dashing from the barracks across the field to us."

American observers had seen the Pfalz crash and telephoned it in to the aerodrome. Eddie was ecstatic but drained. "Indeed, an aviator, and a fledgling aviator in particular, often runs the whole gamut of human feelings during a single flight," wrote Hall.

Eddie's published account of his first victory, which he split with Hall, would soar with dash and confidence. "Raising the nose of my airplane slightly the fiery streak lifted itself like a stream of water pouring from a garden hose," runs the passage in "Fighting the Flying Circus." "The swerving of the Pfalz course indicated that its rudder no longer was controlled by a directing foot." Embellished by his ghostwriter, these words reflect a bravado – even arrogance – that did not characterize Eddie in the flesh, and also suggested that he had brought down the Hun almost entirely by himself. His original report, which he submitted to the writer soon after the war, paints a different and more modest picture. "To me, it was a great deal like taking something which did not belong to me rightfully, as I shall always be convinced that it was Captain Hall's victory and not mine, due to his superior marksmanship."

Eddie understood that Hall had given him the greatest of gifts, a role in a first kill that engendered within him a "wonderful feeling of self confidence." For a man who always felt at the edge of falling off into the deepest obscurity, his first victory would come as an enormous relief, helping move him beyond the mishaps and bad judgment calls that had plagued him over the last several weeks as he fought to master the dauntingly steep learning curve of aerial combat. In recognition of the kill, Eddie would receive the Croix de Guerre avec Palme. Despite this award, he knew how far he still had to go.

James Hall often took up the question of whether a flier had "plenty of sand": the grit, guts, and skill essential to making oneself a true combat flier, not just an adept flying-school pupil. Hall and Lufbery certainly had sand enough. Did Eddie?

John F. Ross is the author of "War on the Run: The Epic Story of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America's First Frontier." He has served as executive editor of American Heritage *and on the board of editors at* Smithsonian *magazine. Visit his website at* ***johnfross.com****.*

This Necklace is NOT for Sale…

…It's yours for FREE*

*No kidding. Only Stauer can give you 200 carats of genuine amethyst for **NOTHING**.*

You may think you understood the concept of "priceless" jewelry. For years, "priceless" meant "astronomically expensive." Owning "priceless" treasures was a rare privilege reserved for celebrities, billionaires, and royalty. The best most of us could do was dream. Until now...

Stauer smashes the luxury status quo with the release of our **FREE* 200-Carat *Lusso Amethyst Necklace***. That's right, we said **FREE**... as in "priceless." No charge.* ZERO dollars.* Call now and we'll send you this impressive helping of genuine amethyst (independently appraised at $295) for **FREE**. We cut the price 100% and you pay only $19.95, our charge for shipping, processing and insurance. There are no tricks or gimmicks. You aren't obligated to spend another dime or dollar with us... although we make it VERY hard to resist.

Why give away jewelry? We want your attention. Once you get a closer look at our rare gemstone treasures and vintage-inspired watches, and once you discover the guilt-free fun of getting "Luxury for Less," we're betting that you'll fall in love with Stauer. If not? Keep your **FREE *Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** anyway. No hard feelings.

A collection of purple perfection. Your ***Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** is a 200-carat symphony of smooth purple genuine gemstones. Each gemstone's shape and translucence ignites the velvety, violet hues. The polished amethysts are hand-set on double-knotted jeweler's thread, and the stunning 18" necklace (with 2" extender) secures with a gold-finished lobster clasp. Once you wear it, you'll see that it hangs with the same weight and elegance as similar strands that sell for hundreds more.

One more surprise... If we had our way, we'd send your ***Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** with no shipping charge. Unfortunately, the rising cost of gas and freight makes that impossible. But, to sweeten the deal, we'll include a **$20 Stauer Gift Coupon** with your **FREE** necklace. Amethyst is one of the world's most coveted gemstones and our supply is extremely limited. An offer this good will not last very long. Call to reserve your **FREE *Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** today and treat yourself (or someone you love) to a brilliant new definition of priceless luxury!

Lusso Amethyst Necklace (200 ctw) ~~$199~~**

Your Cost With Offer Code— **FREE***

***pay only shipping & processing of $19.95.**

You must use the offer code below to receive this special free necklace.

1-800-859-1680

ACCREDITED BUSINESS BBB Rating of A+

Offer Code LAN206-01
Please mention this code when you call.

Stauer® 14101 Southcross Drive W., Dept. LAN206-01, Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

Necklace enlarged to show luxurious detail.

200 ctw of genuine amethyst • Gold-finished spacers • 18"+2" length necklace

* This offer is valid in the United States (and Puerto Rico) except in TX, FL, CO, OK, RI, NH, WV, OR, SC, VA and ID. These state residents will be charged one cent ($.01) + shipping & processing for the item. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. Offer subject to state and local regulations. Not valid with any other offers and only while supplies last. This offer is limited to one item per shipping address. *** Free is only for customers who use the offer code versus the original Stauer.com price. † For more information concerning the appraisal, visit **http://www.stauer.com/appraisedvalues.asp**.*

Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices™

A MONTH OF HOURS

When a veteran couple fell on hard times, The American Legion and The Home Depot teamed up to help complete their home.

BY KEN OLSEN

First came the crippling re-injury of Kathi Jensen's spine. Then the loss of her husband's job and the couple's health insurance while she was undergoing $700-a-month physical therapy critical to her ability to walk. Followed by the couple being forced to move into a half-finished home in the middle of the winter.

Such was the 2013 Christmas season for Kathi and Gary Jensen.

"All of a sudden, we were out-of-pocket everything," she says. The money they were counting on to finish their house, designed to ease the stress on Kathi's disintegrating spine, vaporized in the face of medical bills and basic living expenses.

To say that The Home Depot and American Legion Post 56 of Idaho arrived at a critical moment would be an understatement. "Once we started on the house, we couldn't really turn back," Gary says.

To understand how much a $4,500 grant and hours of donated labor meant to the Jensens, it's important to understand how these two veterans – she served in the National Guard, he in the Army – arrived at the intersection of hopeless and discouraged.

Kathi fell and injured her spine at her day job with California's Imperial County Health Department in 1985. Surgery was too risky and rehabilitation nonexistent. "Back then, they kind of wrote people off," she says. "Basically they taught you to live out of a wheelchair, and that's that."

She spent four months of a yearlong hospital stay in traction and the next five years rehabilitating herself. "I began to study exercise physiology and neurology books," says Kathi, who was a nurse in the National Guard until the injury ended her service. "I wheeled myself down to the track where the Blue Angels ran. I would stand, fall over, and often those guys would help stand me back up." She kept trying. By 1990, Kathi could finally walk without crutches and braces.

In the years following, she met and married Gary Jensen, who served first with the infantry and then as a helicopter mechanic in Vietnam. The couple

Legionnaires rallied around Gary and Kathi Jensen of Howe, Idaho, during a Home Depot Rebuilding Together event, helping finish a home renovation the couple could not complete. Photo by Todd Trigsted

made their living training and transporting show horses across the country for private clients as well as winning national championships with their own horses. That ended in late 2007 after Kathi started experiencing intense pain and inexplicable muscle contractions. The couple moved into a little log house with a concrete floor on a piece of property they owned in Howe, Idaho, an unincorporated community 86 miles west of Idaho Falls. Gary began working on a nearby farm.

Kathi soon required surgery to repair four collapsed neck vertebrae and started intense physical therapy. But the concrete floors in their house, which had served as Kathi's weight room between horse transport trips, exacerbated her spinal problems. So the couple signed an agreement to sell the house and started to build a home designed to ease the pain and strain on her back.

"We really debated taking this on," Gary says. "At the time, I didn't know I would lose the job I'd had for six or seven years."

Every minute Gary wasn't working his day job he spent on their new house – plumbing, wiring, insulating, running for supplies. About four months into their construction project, his boss cut his hours to near zero and eliminated his health insurance benefits. The sale of the Jensens' old house closed, forcing them to move – first to Idaho Falls to live with Jensen's daughter and, after the cost of commuting to Howe became overwhelming, into their unfinished home.

It took Gary months to find a new job – one that paid about half as much as his previous position and required him to commute 90 miles round-trip each day. Work on the couple's house stalled. Kathi cut back on her physical therapy to save money.

Two things happened amid these dark days. First, Post 56 Commander Bob Skinner heard about the Jensens' troubles through his contacts in the eastern Idaho veterans community. "I asked if I could meet them and find out what their plight was," he says. "At the time we went out there, they had a

functioning toilet in the home, and that was it. They carried water to the house in a bucket."

Workers at the Home Depot store in Idaho Falls, which the Jensens frequented, had also learned of the couple's dilemma. "We were all crying before Kathi was done telling her story," says store operations manager Kristin Shurtz. "The Jensens are just the kind of people you want to help because they are both veterans. And they were victims of our economy."

The Home Depot Foundation has helped repair and renovate more than 13,000 veterans' homes since 2011. Individual stores can fix the little things that make a huge difference: weatherizing windows, insulating attics, even installing a heater on a stock watering tank for an eastern Idaho veteran who was chipping ice on winter mornings so his animals could drink.

In addition, each store can apply for grants of up to $12,000 to help veterans. All it takes is a grant application and a willing nonprofit partner. Enter Post 56.

"Bob Skinner is pretty amazing," says Shurtz, whose father also belongs to the Idaho Falls Legion post. "He really is all about serving veterans and serving the community."

Skinner sent the grant application to the Home Depot Foundation on Feb. 14, the Jensens' anniversary. They got word in April that they had received a $4,500 grant that paid for sheetrock, bathroom tile and plumbing fixtures, a utility sink, flooring for the laundry room and other materials. "They were living in a shell," Shurtz says. "That's no way for a veteran to live."

The Idaho Falls Home Depot found a contractor who installed the sheetrock for the price of gas money to Howe. Then, in June, 10 Home Depot volunteers and 10 volunteers from Post 56 headed to the Jensens' home with their tools in hand. They installed the bathtub, tile, toilet and laundry room sink – Post 56 Legionnaire Darrel Homer is a master plumber – and put down the laundry room flooring. They also hooked up the hot-water heater and wrapped the house in Tyvek.

"The time The Home Depot and American Legion volunteers put in – that was a month of hours for me," Gary Jensen says. "There's no way we could have done that without their help."

"It will be a cherished day," Kathi adds. "There were a lot of hugs handed out."

Post 56 put on an auction in October and raised another $3,000, which purchased a wood stove and chimney to heat the Jensen house. There are still plenty of hurdles before the Jensens have a fully livable home, given tight finances and the cost of Kathi's ongoing medical care that isn't covered by Medicare. They manage to buy one light fixture a month and are trying to figure out how to finish the kitchen, insulate and side the house, and install the rest of the flooring.

Kathi worries about her husband's health as much as or more than her own. Approaching 70, Gary works as a farmhand six days a week, putting in especially long hours during harvest. He has Type II diabetes, one of about a dozen illnesses VA recognizes as linked to Agent Orange exposure among veterans like him who had boots on the ground in Vietnam. Despite that indisputable service connection, VA recently denied his Agent Orange claim.

Kathi also feels conflicted about the couple's inability to do it on their own.

"I feel uneasy about asking for help," she says, surveying the bare sheetrock walls and dusty subfloors of their future living room. "But to have the Legion behind us makes me feel like I'm part of something greater than myself."

Ken Olsen is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

Photo by Todd Trigsted

American Legion Post 56 in Idaho Falls, Idaho, continues to raise money to help the Jensens finish their house.

Donations can be sent to:

American Legion Post 56
Attn: Jensens Housing Fund
P.O. Box 50275
Idaho Falls, ID 83405

Learn more about The American Legion's and The Home Depot's efforts to help Kathi and Gary Jensen.

www.legion.org/legiontv

Civil engineers do renovation work at Wisconsin's Camp American Legion.
Photo courtesy Camp American Legion

LEGION, HOME DEPOT UNITE ON PROJECTS NATIONWIDE

Re-roofing a building at Camp American Legion in Wisconsin. Replacing a hot-water heater for a struggling veteran in Sloan, Iowa. Making an historic American Legion post wheelchair accessible in Tybee Island, Ga.

Since 2011, The American Legion and the Home Depot Foundation have teamed up to make critical home repairs for veterans and renovate Legion posts across the country. And it is as important to Home Depot employees like Kristin Shurtz – operations manager of the Idaho Falls, Idaho, store and daughter of an Army veteran – as it is to the grateful veterans who benefit from this team effort.

"It means a lot to me, as a 14-year associate, to work for a company that gives back to the community," she says.

It's also important to work with a service organization that can help Home Depot make the most difference in the veterans community. "The American Legion is very supportive and a great partner," Shurtz says. "They help us find the right candidates. We wouldn't have been as successful without them."

Prepare for this relationship to grow exponentially. The foundation has pledged $1 million to help veterans and posts in the coming year. "We know we're going to be working together for a long time," Home Depot Foundation Executive Director Gaven Gregory said in announcing the plan at the Legion's 96th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., in August.

The Home Depot and the Legion have worked together for at least a decade. The first project involved renovating the fairgrounds at Post 194 in Lincolnton, Ga., in April 2005, says Heather Pritchard, the foundation's senior manager of national partnerships. The Home Depot started working with the Legion on a regular basis in 2011, when the company shifted its focus to giving back to veterans, she adds. The company initially contributed $140,000, but its outlay tripled the following year.

One of the largest Home Depot-Legion projects to date involved renovating Post 233 in Loganville, Ga., in September. More than 350 Home Depot employees helped touch up the post's main hall, lobby, entryway and exterior, Pritchard says. The volunteers also built a new deck, added picnic tables, painted and installed new flooring.

This isn't drive-by support or one-offs. Located at Lake Tomahawk, Wis., Camp American Legion provides a week of top-notch rest, recuperation and rehabilitation for veterans, active-duty servicemembers and their families, including National Guard members and reservists. Camp director Kevin Moshea approached The Home Depot in 2012 after hearing about the company's commitment to helping veterans and military families.

The foundation gave the camp grants of $2,500 in 2012, $3,500 in 2013 and $5,000 in 2014. That's resulted in a new roof on the Health and Wellness Building, a split-rail fence and, in 2014, significant funding to remodel a cabin the camp recently purchased.

The Home Depot paid for materials, and about 30 airmen from the civil engineering squadron of the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 128th Air Refueling Wing donated two weeks of labor in September.

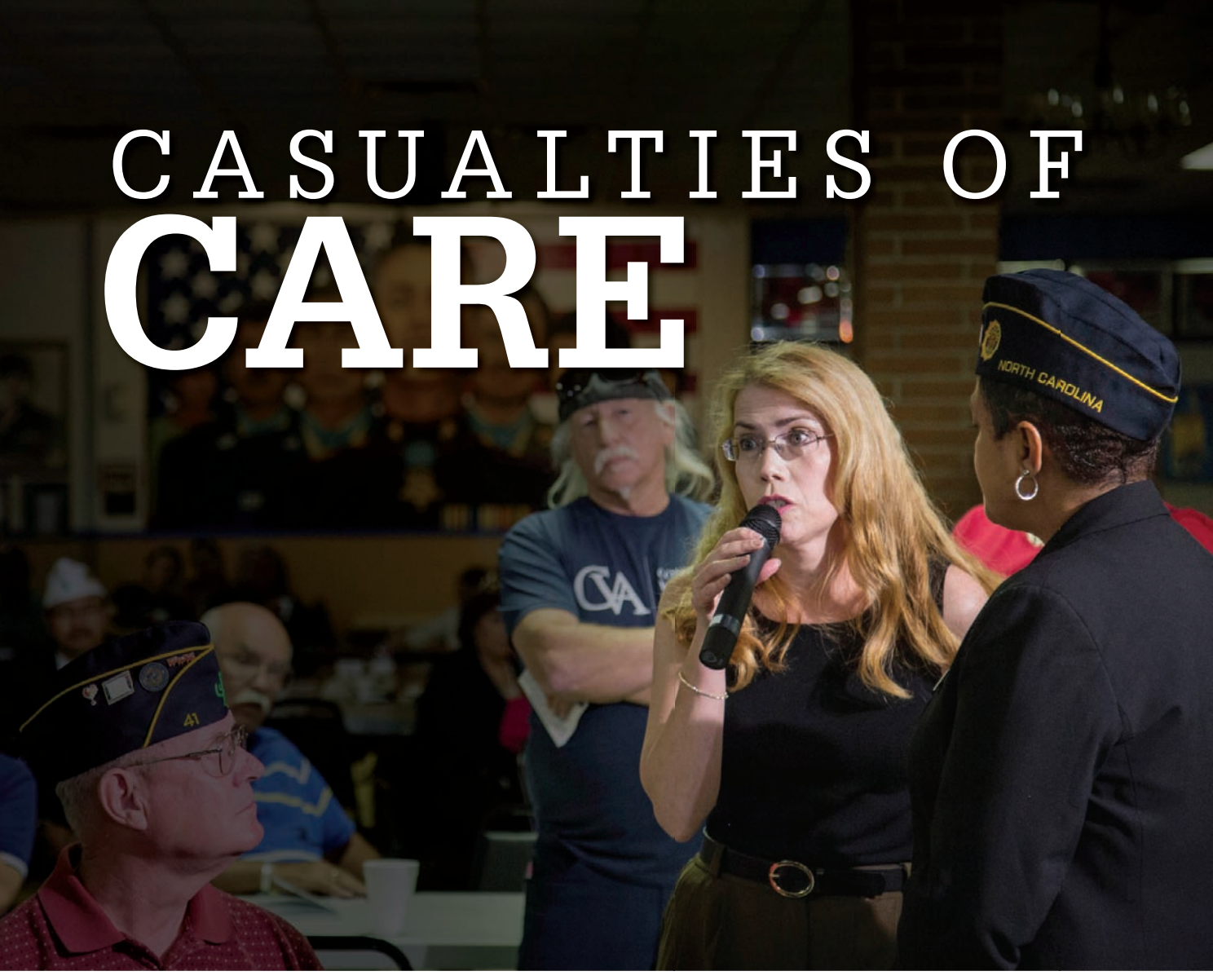
"They helped make this project happen," Moshea says. "It's the thing that sets Home Depot apart."

The support comes as Camp American Legion expands its outreach to younger veterans and families and expands its season to accommodate more guests. The number of people using the camp doubled from 2010 to 2013, Moshea says. And the camp is now open 21 weeks each year instead of 15. "We are stretching the Wisconsin spring, summer and fall as far as we can stretch it."

The Home Depot isn't just providing financial support, Moshea says. "In essence, it has nothing to do with lumber, nails and screws. They are helping us in our mission to help veterans, servicemembers and their families heal."

– Ken Olsen

CASUALTIES OF CARE



Inadequate VA staffing, surges in patient numbers and appointment cover-ups blamed for preventable deaths and national demands for accountability.

BY KEN OLSEN

In February 2012, Dr. Katherine Mitchell warned the new Phoenix VA Medical Center director that the hospital's emergency room was so dangerous it should be closed unless there was an immediate increase in staffing and triage-nurse training.

By then, Mitchell had been voicing concerns over delays in treating heart attacks, infections, blood pressure problems and other medical issues in the emergency room for more than two years.

"There were hundreds of cases of near misses or bad outcomes," she says. "We needed more staffing and more triage-nurse training, but there wasn't any money."

Absent changes, patients would die, she argued.

Mitchell's impromptu meeting with now-dismissed director Sharon Helman touched off 18 months of reprisals that included Mitchell being forced to take a job in a small outpatient clinic. She was then placed on administrative leave in September 2013 and told she was under investigation after filing what she thought was a confidential complaint with the VA inspector general. Her concerns remained buried until Phoenix became ground zero in the VA scandal last spring – concerns she doubts will ever be addressed.

Mitchell's experience illuminates a crisis that goes far beyond secret patient waiting lists and VA administrators falsifying records. Her story

OPPOSITE: *VA whistleblower Dr. Katherine Mitchell, center, addresses the crowd at American Legion Post 41 in Phoenix during a town-hall meeting focusing on delayed care and unnecessary deaths at the local VA medical center. Dozens of Arizona veterans and their families described their personal experiences at the Phoenix VA, which has been under scrutiny after it was reported that 40 veterans died while on secret waiting lists there.* Photo by Nick Oza

bolstered a litany of what were called "preventable deaths" at VA facilities, caused by a surge in patient demand, mismanagement, unsanitary conditions, understaffing, a lack of accountability and a culture of retribution.

"It's a two-pronged issue," Mitchell says. "There's a lack of funding for medical providers and ancillary resources. And when physicians or providers bring up issues, they are retaliated against."

As former Pittsburgh VA physician Victor Yu puts it, "When there is a problem at the VA, there is little effort to correct it. And huge effort to minimize it."

Casualties are everywhere. Army veteran Barry Coates is dying of cancer because the Columbia, S.C., VA failed to perform a routine colonoscopy until it was too late. Similar VA errors caused the deaths of six other South Carolina veterans. Three preventable deaths came to light in the Memphis, Tenn., VA emergency room, including a patient's lethal allergic reaction to a drug his medical chart clearly indicated he should never receive.

A suicide and two overdose deaths at the Atlanta VA were caused in part by failures in management, leadership and oversight, the VA inspector general concluded. A *Legionella* outbreak in Pittsburgh VA was blamed for killing at least six veterans and infecting as many as two dozen others.

A Korean War veteran suffered a stroke and later died at the Dallas VA Medical Center as a result of botched surgeries to remove a lump from his neck. A Navy veteran who had threatened to commit suicide hanged himself with his own belt hours after being admitted to the Buffalo, N.Y., VA Medical Center. All of this is in addition to claims from Sam Foote, a former VA doctor, that some 40 veterans died waiting for care in Phoenix.

The total number of veterans who needlessly died at VA hospitals in recent years will never be known. But VA paid $200 million in wrongful death settlements to the families of nearly 1,000 veterans in the decade following 9/11, according to the Center for Investigative Reporting. And despite scores of investigations, congressional hearings and whistleblower complaints, many VA executives focused their resources on hiding problems rather than fixing them, which ultimately led to the resignation of former VA Secretary Eric Shinseki.

"I was too trusting," Shinseki said before stepping down in May. "We now know that VA has a systemic and totally unacceptable lack of integrity within some of our veterans health facilities."

"Patient deaths are tragic – preventable deaths are unacceptable," then-American Legion National Commander Dan Dellinger said as Mitchell, Foote and other VA physicians went public with their concerns. "But failure to disclose safety information – or worse, to cover up mistakes – is unforgivable."

SHORT STAFFED Mitchell encountered problems soon after she went to work as a nurse at the Phoenix VA Medical Center in 1989. She recalls VA refusing to provide nutritional assistance for low-income patients with feeding tubes when they were sent home on weekend passes. So Mitchell and other nurses acquired liquid meal supplements from other parts of the hospital that the patients could use during their furloughs. In addition, "we were always short-handed," she says.

Nevertheless, Mitchell – who comes from a family of soldiers and Marines – so enjoyed working with veterans that she went to medical school and returned to the Phoenix VA as an emergency room doctor in 2003.

The emergency room was so short-handed that medical staff had to answer phones, transport patients to radiology for X-rays, wash stretchers and perform other duties that aides would traditionally handle. Those shortages were exacerbated by low pay – an experienced VA doctor earns about the same as a new non-VA physician – and slow hiring procedures, Mitchell says. The Phoenix VA never had a full complement of emergency room physicians because candidates, weary of the process, gave up and pursued other jobs, she adds.

LAB WARS Shortsighted management also appears to have created prime conditions for the *Legionella* resurgence that killed Maureen Ciarolla's father and at least five other veterans. In 2006, Pittsburgh VA Healthcare System Director Michael Moreland closed the Special Pathogens Lab, which analyzed *Legionella* specimens from hospitals all over the United States, and told lab director Yu and renowned microbiologist Dr. Janet Stout that their pioneering infectious-disease work was no longer needed. "Mr. Moreland said we were using

ACCOUNTABILITY: VA'S PRIORITY

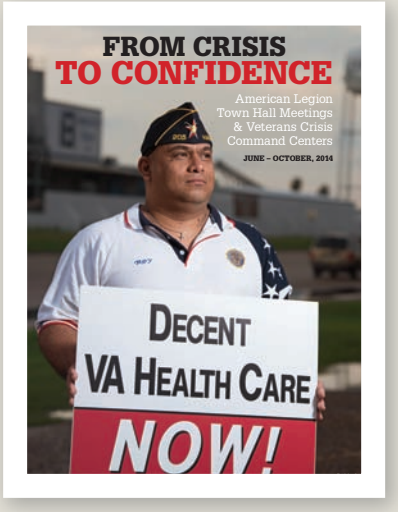
The Nov. 24 dismissal of Phoenix VA Healthcare System Director Sharon Helman, after nearly six months of administrative leave in the wake of allegations that up to 40 veterans died waiting for medical appointments that were never scheduled there, was "a long-awaited step" in the department's journey to improved accountability, American Legion National Commander Mike Helm said.

New VA Secretary Robert McDonald has made accountability a top priority since his appointment in late July. In the aftermath of the Phoenix scandal, and leadership accountability issues brought to light at more than 20 other facilities where preventable deaths were under investigation, VA reports that:

- 77 percent of its facilities have new leaders or leadership teams.
- More than 500 VA employees have been terminated.
- Three senior executives were removed from their positions and two others retired.
- More than 4,000 site inspections have been conducted.
- More than 8,300 VA staff members have completed new training programs on access and scheduling.

CRISIS TO CONFIDENCE

As the issue of VA preventable deaths, delayed access, the claims backlog and leadership accountability climbed to the top of the national agenda last spring, The American Legion conducted town hall meetings and command center events in over a dozen hard-hit communities. Working alongside VA staff in those communities, assistance was provided to more than 3,000 veterans, and approximately $1 million in retroactive benefits were paid. Now called Veterans Benefits Centers, the events continue in 2015. "We will keep meeting with veterans in person and monitor VA's progress as long as it takes," said Verna Jones, executive director of the Legion's Washington headquarters office. "We will continue to give veterans their voice in the road to restored trust."



See a digital booklet featuring photos and videos from the Legion's command centers, and view the 2015 schedule:

www.legion.org/veteranshealthcare

resources, and we were really unnecessary," says Yu, a professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. "It's extraordinary and tragic."

Established in 1979, the lab developed the premier tools to identify and fight *Legionella* bacteria, which is transmitted via inhaled water droplets and causes a virulent pneumonia. Yu and Stout also proved the effectiveness of a new water disinfection system – copper-silver ionization – that helped prevent *Legionella* infections at the Pittsburgh VA for more than a decade. They published more than 100 research articles on *Legionella* control, treatment and prevention. Stout's request for a raise, after 20 years, drew the ire of VA administrators who instead decided to close the lab. She and Yu came to work one Monday in July 2006 to find the lab doors locked and police standing guard. "I was shocked – and shocked at the way it was done," she says.

The American Federation of Government Employees stopped VA's attempt to fire Stout. But she resigned after VA closed the lab and demoted her. Yu was fired for continuing to analyze *Legionella* specimens while he appealed the decision to close the lab. As he was leaving the Pittsburgh VA he received a letter thanking him for that 11th-hour work, which helped stop an outbreak that had contaminated drinking water at a VA medical center in the Southwest.

Stout had arranged to transfer the lab's specimen collection – invaluable for infectious-disease research and prevention – to the University of Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh VA instead destroyed it. "It was gut-wrenching," she says.

The American Legion, along with University of Pittsburgh medical school faculty and some members of Congress, protested the lab's closure. Five years later, Ciarolla's father contracted *Legionella* and died after a lengthy stay at the hospital. An investigation by the CDC revealed that 32 cases of Legionella were detected at the Pittsburgh VA between January 2011 and October 2012. That micro-pandemic was inevitable given VA's decision to close the lab, Ciarolla told Congress last fall. "And veterans paid the price."

Not only did Pittsburgh VA administrators hide the most recent outbreak until it was leaked to a local newspaper, but they have also hidden *Legionella* cases dating back to the lab's closure, Yu says. "The real date for the beginning of the outbreak is 2007."

Moreland went on to become VA regional director for Pennsylvania and surrounding states. He received a $63,000 bonus after the VA inspector

ANNOUNCING PRE-RELEASE OF 2015 SILVER EAGLES AT LOWEST PRICE IN 5 YEARS

2015 SILVER AMERICAN EAGLES

Announcing…International Currency is now taking pre-release orders for the new 2015 Silver American Eagles.* Incredibly, you can reserve these brand new U.S. Silver dollars at only **$17.90** per coin…**our lowest pre-release price in over five years!** Already a favorite among collectors both in the U.S. and abroad, this new low price is sure to add to their immense popularity. We've secured a minimum of 500 coins for this incredible offer and orders will be taken on a first come, first served basis. We have no way of knowing if more coins will be available at the **$17.90** once the 500 are gone so please don't wait, pre-order yours today!** Call 1-800-323-5055.

CALL NOW TOLL FREE (800) 323-5055

*Expected ship date is the end of January 2015 pending release from U.S. Mint.
**Additional coins available at our cost plus shipping and handling.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENCY, L.L.C
8725 EASTEX FREEWAY • BEAUMONT, TX 77708
IC# 26110115

OFFICIAL MILITARY VETERAN HATS

All hats are embroidered, solid back, 100% brush cotton twill. Adjustable strap - one size fits all.

ONLY $12.95 EA.

SUPER SALE

Use Code: H386RA

All Hats Available With or Without Eggs*

30 DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE (Less S&H)

Send to: Rush industries, Inc. Dept.(H386RA)
263 Horton Highway, Mineola NY 11501

Please indicate style & quantity:

	WWII	Korea	Vietnam	Dis. Vet	USA Pride
Vet War Hats (No Eggs)					
Hats w/ Eggs (Add $5)					N/A

	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Frc.	C.Guard
Military Hats (No Eggs)					
Hats w/ Eggs (Add $5)					

Add $4.95 S&H + $1.95 for each add'l Hat

❑ Add $3.00 for Express service (5-7 bus. days).
Note: For personal checks, there will be a 10 day verification delay.

Enclosed is check or money order for $_____
Or Charge my:

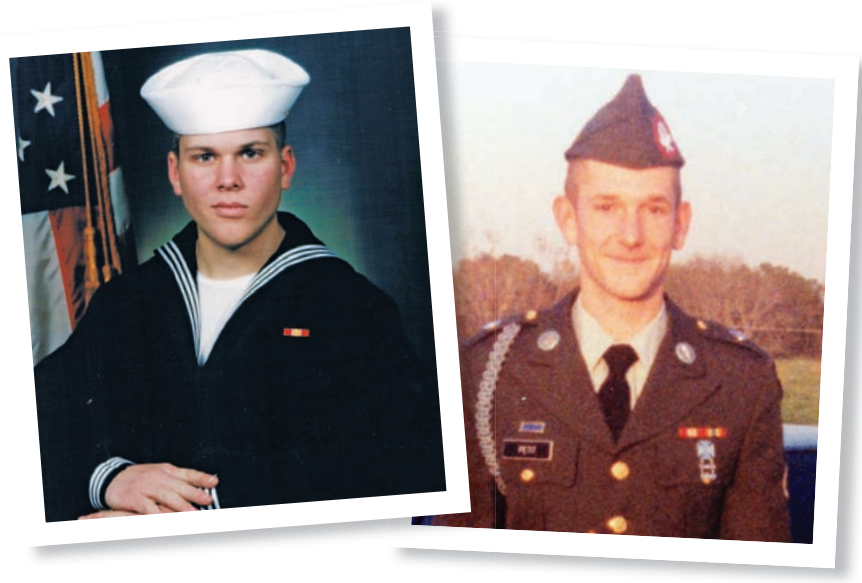
❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ AMERICAN EXPRESS ❑ DISCOVER Exp. Date_____

Account#_____
Name_____
Address_____
City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Order toll free: 1-866-741-7874
OR www.RushIndustries.com (H386RA)

*Richly Embroidered Official Scrambled Eggs Add $5 ea. hat (shown on brim above).

© Rush Industries, Inc. 2014



Cheryl Placek pleaded for the Buffalo VA Medical Center to admit her son, Daniel, for a painkiller addiction. Less than 12 hours later, he hanged himself.
Photo courtesy Cheryl Placek

Worried he'd hurt someone, Joseph Petit went to the Atlanta VA for counseling. He took his life in a hospital bathroom, and was found after his family called VA to check on him.
Photo courtesy Brandie Petit

general criticized the Pittsburgh hospital's handling of the outbreak. He subsequently retired from VA.

SUICIDE WATCH A rash of suicides has also plagued VA. Cheryl Placek's son sought VA's help with a painkiller addiction he developed after he injured his back. The Navy veteran had attempted to get treatment at three private hospitals before landing at the Buffalo VA Medical Center in January 2012. Daniel Placek was despondent, threatening suicide and in a drug-induced psychosis, his mother says. "VA knew he was in serious trouble ... knew he was talking like he didn't want to live. We had to beg for three weeks to get him in."

Less than 12 hours after Daniel was admitted to the Buffalo VA inpatient substance abuse program, Placek got the call that her son had hung himself in a hospital bathroom. "He's our only child," she says, her voice breaking.

Brandie Petit's brother went to the Atlanta VA for counseling in November 2012 during a long struggle with debilitating knee injuries that had ended his Army career 20 years earlier. VA lost track of Joseph Petit soon after he saw his psychiatrist. They found his body in a hospital bathroom the next day, after his mother and sister called the Atlanta VA to check on him.

Strung out on a 30-pill-a-day regimen VA doctors had prescribed, Joseph was worried he was going to hurt someone, his sister says. "Instead, he took his own life. He should have never had the opportunity."

VA WATCHDOG VA's preventable deaths have received sustained scrutiny from House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller, R-Fla., who has conducted hearings, subpoenaed agency records, and called on VA officials to demonstrate they are serious about changing the culture. "The single most important mission of VA is to provide the highest quality of care for the men and women who have served, and support for their families," Miller says.

That would go a long way toward addressing VA's preventable-deaths problem, John Daigh Jr., assistant inspector general for health-care inspections, said during a congressional hearing in April. "The unexpected deaths that the (OIG) continues to report on at VA facilities could be avoided if VA would focus first on its core mission to deliver high-quality health care."

Acknowledging the agency's failures, VA Robert McDonald has raised physician salaries, visited troubled VA hospitals, fired employees and administrators. He told CBS' "60 Minutes" that he has a list of 1,000 additional employees who may face disciplinary action. McDonald has also warned VA administrators not to punish whistleblowers. Current and former medical staff are skeptical.

"The top echelon of the VA is essentially a huge web where the people are all protected by each other," Yu says. "The tragedy is (that) VA can be a good place. The physicians and nurses are more dedicated than the medical staffs in other hospitals."

Mitchell and her colleagues, too, say they have more fear than hope. "The feeling is that this is only a temporary change, a lull in the malevolent administrative storm, which will end as soon as the cameras are turned off," she says. "When the storm resumes, so will the retaliation against anyone who brought issues to the attention of the OIG or the public. I feel like a canary just waiting for the cat to pounce."

Ken Olsen is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

USAA is proud to be the
Preferred Provider
of Insurance and Financial Services
to The American Legion

APPLY FOR THE CREDIT CARD THAT SUPPORTS

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Get **The American Legion USAA Rewards™ World MasterCard®** and take advantage of:

- **0% introductory APR for 12 months** on balance transfers and convenience checks posted in the first three months after account opening **(10.9% to 25.9% variable APR after 12 months on these balances)**[1]
- **No annual fee**
- **USAA Rewards points** you can redeem for your choice of cash, merchandise and other exciting rewards[2]

GET 2,500 BONUS POINTS

APPLY TODAY.

USAA.COM/LEGIONCC or call 877-820-1825

USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its affiliates. USAA products are available only in those jurisdictions where USAA is authorized to sell them.

[1] **Offer subject to approval.** As of 10/1/14, regular APRs on purchases, cash advances and balance transfers are 10.9% to 25.9%, depending on your credit history and other factors. APRs will vary with the market based on the Prime Rate. There is a transaction fee of 3% on cash advances ($200 maximum on balance transfers and convenience checks) and 1% on foreign transactions. Rates and fees subject to change. You have a grace period on Purchases when you pay your balance in full each month. If you transfer a balance or write a convenience check with this offer, you will have a balance on your account. Therefore your grace period will not apply and you cannot avoid interest on purchases until you pay your entire account balance including your promotional balances and your regular balances. If based on your credit history and other factors you qualify for a credit limit under $5,000, you will receive a USAA Platinum MasterCard with the same rates and fees. [2] Earn 1 point for every $1 in credit card purchases. Other restrictions apply. Rewards points terminate if account is closed or delinquent or program ends. USAA Rewards Program terms and conditions will be provided with your card. Purchase of a bank product does not establish eligibility for or membership in USAA property and casualty insurance companies. The American Legion receives financial support from USAA for this sponsorship.

This credit card program is issued by USAA Savings Bank, Member FDIC. © 2014 USAA. 211214-1214

Seventy years after the cold, snowy, bloody fight that led to victory in World War II, Bulge veterans continue to find each other.

THE BATTLE REMEMBERED

BY HENRY HOWARD

Seventy years ago, Europe experienced its coldest winter in decades. Adolf Hitler decided the time was right to launch a final, desperate offensive to halt the Allies. U.S. troops battled subzero temperatures, blizzards and waist-deep snow while German warplanes buzzed overhead.

Many U.S. soldiers had only their summer uniforms to fend off the harsh winter conditions. Douglas Dillard and others traded German flags and other collectibles they had captured to U.S. tank crews for their warmer clothing. "Some people didn't have that much," remembers Dillard, a retired colonel and president of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Ardennes. "None of us had snowshoes or anything like that."

For Dillard, keeping the memories of those who did not come home from the battle is a personal mission. "My battalion was destroyed," he says. "I was with those people from the beginning, the alpha and the omega of that battalion. The general public needs to know what the soldiers, paratroopers and others did when they were there, what they had to go through just to survive. I think the people who survived were just lucky. I really do."

The Germans referred to it as *Unternehmen Wacht am Rhein* (Operation Watch on the Rhine), but it became better known as the Battle of the Bulge. It lasted from Dec. 16, 1944, to Jan. 25, 1945, and is known as the bloodiest battle fought by the United States during World War II. Of the more than 600,000 Americans involved in the fighting, 19,000 were killed and tens of thousands were wounded.

Dillard's group convenes at least annually to share stories of honor, survival and bravery while remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Over Labor Day weekend in Columbia, S.C., the veterans had such a reunion, sharing their stories, questions, passion and humor.

THE FIELD NURSE Katherine Nolan served as a nurse with the 53rd Field Hospital, which was attached to various infantry and armored units throughout the war. The field hospital team often had only four hours to find a new location, prepare medical tents and be ready to receive severely wounded patients. "Sometimes the incoming wounded arrived before we were ready, so you learned how to set up the hospital in the order they needed it. You improvised a lot," she recalls.

The nurses' primary mission was to keep the patients alive and warm. Two potbelly stoves generated minimal heat in the makeshift hospital. Nurses often swaddled patients like babies in whatever blankets they could find. It was hard work, especially given the severe winter. "I've been cold since the Bulge," says Nolan, now 93.

Once a patient was stabilized, he would be evacuated to a full military hospital. "We never heard back about how they made out after they left us," Nolan recalls. "We often wondered if they made it all the way home."

Nearly 70 years later, she still wondered what happened to one patient in particular: Hamilton Greene, war correspondent for *The American Legion Magazine.* Nolan was mentioned in a story about Greene in the February 1945 issue. "There's a nice girl nurse, Lt. Katherine Greene of Worcester (Mass.), in charge of his ward," the article says, referring to Nolan by her maiden name.

Nolan says Greene was a model patient. "He was in a lot of pain, but you wouldn't know it. He always had a smile on his face. He was always very upbeat and, as it mentions in the article, he really helped me with the other patients because he had such a great sense of humor. You would never believe anything was wrong with him. But his wounds were worse than some of the others."

Unbeknownst to Nolan, after Greene left her field hospital, he recovered fully. He picked up his correspondent duties, and was aboard USS *Missouri* when Japan formally surrendered. Later, Greene returned home to his wife and two young children and continued to work as a freelance illustrator.

Upon learning, after all these years, that he had survived, Nolan smiled and beamed. "That's the best news I've heard in a long time."

THE COLLECTOR Irving Locker describes himself as a short, poor Jewish kid from New Jersey who grew up quickly during World War II. Promoted to staff sergeant at 19, Locker had 65 men under his command in the 116th AAA Gun Battalion in the 1st Army's 7th Corps. "My promise to them was to bring them home alive."

Locker and his AAA (Anti-tank, Anti-aircraft and Artillery) battalion fired 90 mm guns that

OPPOSITE: *Three U.S. infantrymen in the snow during the Battle of the Bulge, Ardennes, Belgium, World War II, January 1945.*
Getty Images

Hear firsthand accounts from Battle of the Bulge veterans at the Legion's website: ***www.legion.org/legiontv***

weighed 9.5 tons each and fired shells that measured 3 feet in length, weighed 45 pounds and could hit a target 30,000 feet in the air. "It was the only ammunition that could go through the armor of a German tank," Locker says.

The unit defended Utah Beach on D-Day and later served a pivotal role in winning the Battle of the Bulge. When the Germans tried to seal in the Allies, Locker's unit was surrounded on three sides. "We didn't have ammunition, food or anything," he says. "We were going into the mortuary to take clothing and boots off our dead GIs to stay warm. We dug through the snow and ice, but the water from the snow and ice came into the hole where we slept. It was below-zero weather, and we lived through it. It was very difficult."

As the war drew nearer to ending, Locker's unit came across Nazi death camps. "Anybody who says the Holocaust never happened, better talk to me. 'Cause I know what happened."

Locker collected Nazi memorabilia and propaganda, which he still uses today to educate community groups, students and others about the atrocities he saw firsthand. At times, items in his collection serve as a link between families and their World War II ancestors.

A few years ago, Locker met a younger man where he lives in The Villages, Fla. The man's father died in the war when the boy was only 18 months old. Prompted by the discovery of Locker's name in one of his father's Army books, the man visited him to view the artifacts.

"His father signed this flag that I took off a wall in Berlin," Locker says. "He was in my outfit, but I didn't know him real well because men routinely got transferred in and transferred out. Later, the young man came over to my house to see the flag and held it to his cheek and cried. It was absolutely amazing."

THE LIQUIDATOR Mike Levin was a field artillery observer during the Battle of the Bulge. The second lieutenant's duty was to get as close to the Germans as possible, observe their movements and radio back firing instructions.

"I used to get as far forward as I could safely, which wasn't too safe because I was the first one the Germans would see," he recalls. "They looked for a guy with a bar on his helmet. So I used to take some mud and cover it up, and I used to cover the binoculars, too. Because the Germans knew what the guy with the binoculars was doing."

Levin mourns the friends he lost but prefers to focus on stories that evoke humor in the darkness of a war zone. "You are bound on occasion to think of the guys you left over there, and I do that," he says. "When I tell war stories, and I occasionally do, I don't like to tell stories of the dead, dying and wounded. I like to tell lots of funny stories."

One such story occurs after the Battle of the Bulge, when Levin was directed to head toward the town of Bad Godesberg along the Rhine. There, he found a giant hotel, the Rheinhotel Dreesen.

Levin says it had been evacuated except for "an old caretaker who had a big brass ring loaded with keys." Levin ordered his men to set up radio communications while he checked out the entire hotel with the caretaker.

"We went to the basement where there was a long corridor with a heavy oak door at the end," he says. "I thought, that looks interesting to me. I told the old man, *'Öffnen Sie die Tür'* (open the door). He says, *'Ich glaube nicht, einen Schlüssel für diese Tür haben* (I don't have a key for that door).' I didn't believe him. I reached for my .45 and pulled it out, and said, *'Ich habe einen Schlüssel für diese Tür bekam'* (I've got a key for that door). He says, *'Nein nein nein.'* He found a key."

Inside the room, Levin found one of the biggest wine cellars in western Germany. Hundreds of bottles had been looted from the French and stored there.

"There were not only wines but liquors and other stuff," he says. "I put a few cases in my Jeep, but a Jeep can't carry much. The halftrack carried some more cases. But I had hardly dented the stash, so I reluctantly called the division and told them to get the special service officer down here with some big trucks. They did, and they emptied out the wine cellar and distributed them throughout the 7th Armored Division."

None of Levin's stash made it home. "It was fantastic. I consumed the wine on the spot. It was good stuff."

Henry Howard is a deputy director for The American Legion's Media & Communications Division.

Limited Mintage Striking...

Advertisement

WORLD'S FIRST
The 2015 $100 SILVER PROOF

Collectible 2015 date | Mirrored proof background | Larger Franklin portrait | Liberty Bell, quill pen & July 4th date | Minted in one Troy ounce of .999% fine silver

Actual size is 6″ x 2½″

GovMint.com Announces the Limited Mintage Striking of an Extraordinary Silver Proof —the Newest United States $100 Bill Struck in 99.9% Pure Silver. Discount Price $99

This extraordinary piece of pure silver has a surface area that exceeds 15 square inches...and it contains one Troy ounce of pure silver!

And now, during a limited strike period, the very first Year 2015 $100 Silver Proof is available from GovMint.com at a special discount price—only $99!

Exquisite Detail

The historic 2015 $100 Silver Proof is an exquisite adaptation of the United States Treasury's recently redesigned $100 Federal Reserve Note—only the third new $100 bill design in 100 years. It is a true artistic masterpiece that will always be treasured.

99.9% Silver

Best of all, this stunning Silver Proof is even more beautiful than the original, because it's struck in precious silver!

It is a landmark in proof minting, combining unprecedented weight with extraordinary dimension. The specifications for this colossal medallic proof are unparalleled. Each one:

- Is Individually Struck from Pure .999 Silver.
- Weighs one Troy ounce.
- Has a Surface Area That Exceeds 15 Square Inches.
- Contains 31.10 Grams (480 Grains) of Pure Silver.
- Is Individually Registered and Comes With a Numbered Certificate of Authenticity.
- Is Fully Encapsulated to Protect Its Mirror-Finish.
- Includes a Deluxe Presentation Case.

Advance Strike Discount

The price for the 2015 $100 Silver Proof will be set at $129 per proof.

However, if you place your order now, you can acquire this giant silver proof at the special advance strike discount price—only $99..

NOTE TO COLLECTORS: *When you place your order for the $100 silver proof, it will be processed immediately, and the earliest orders will receive the coveted lowest registration numbers.*

Additional Discounts

Substantial additional discounts are available for serious collectors who wish to acquire more than one of these exquisite silver proofs.

Year 2015 $100 Silver Proof
1-4 proofs - $99 each + *s/h*
5-9 proofs - $95 each + *s/h*
10+proofs - $89 each + *s/h*

There is a limit of twenty $100 Silver Proofs per order, and all orders are subject to acceptance by GovMint.com.

Only 9999 Available

GovMint.com will limit striking to only 9999 One Troy Ounce Silver Proofs for the year 2015. Once the edition is sold out, no more 2015 silver proofs can ever be struck. Orders only will be accepted on a strict first-come, first-served basis according to the time and date of the order. Call today for fastest order processing.

For fastest service call today toll-free

1-800-514-6468

Offer Code FRN135-01
Please mention this code when you call.

GovMint.com ▪ 14101 Southcross Dr. W. Dept. FRN135-01 ▪ Burnsville, Minnesota 55337

Prices and availability subject to change without notice. Past performance is not a predictor of future performance.
NOTE: GovMint.com® is a private distributor of worldwide government coin and currency issues and privately issued licensed collectibles and is not affiliated with the United States government. Facts and figures deemed accurate as of October 2014 ©2014 GovMint.com.

GovMint.com®

THE BEST SOURCE FOR COINS WORLDWIDE™

THE MUSIC OF MILITARY SERVICE

Keith Broecker, Rob Raymond and Tom Abbott perform together. Photo by Lucas Carter

Operation Encore blends the songwriting and playing talents of men and women who know the deeper meanings of service.

BY ANDY ROMEY

A veteran isn't someone who sits on a street corner with a sign, or someone with PTSD and a drinking problem. A veteran is a family member and friend. And many also happen to be talented musicians with stories to tell.

Such beliefs led to the creation of Operation Encore, a veterans music project that brought singers and songwriters together to translate their military experiences into song and verse. The result is a compilation CD that was released in November, featuring songs written and performed by active-duty servicemembers, veterans and a military spouse. The project's founders say their goal was to not only provide a therapeutic outlet for performers, but to also help bridge the civilian-military divide.

"We call it Operation Encore because it is another chance at a different part of your life," says Erik Brine, the project's co-founder and a member of American Legion Post 272 in Norwood, N.J. "We want to give people who have this kind of talent a chance to use it. And we want to show other people that these aren't just soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines; they are sisters, brothers, fathers and mothers."

The CD is currently available through iTunes and CD Baby (**www.cdbaby.com/cd/operationencore**). Proceeds first go toward unpaid production costs, and any profits are donated to various veterans charities and organizations. A Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign drew $15,000 in donations, providing the initial capital. Early last year, Operation Encore put out an open call for veteran and military musicians to submit songs for consideration. Thanks to a Facebook fan page and solicitation through VSOs such as the Legion, entries poured in.

"Our only real criteria ... was that it was a genuine song they were inspired to write while in the military," says Rob Raymond, a project co-founder, performer and member of American Legion Post 61 in Avondale, Ariz. "Some are more

overtly military related. They are personal stories or personal feelings about (life) in the military. And some are just songs you might hear anyone play, like a love song."

Air Force veteran Chris Kurek, another co-founder and performer, used one of his two songs – "Never Be the Same" – to tell a story about life with PTSD. "It's a sad truth that life is easier when people are shooting at you," Kurek says. "People might say, 'I don't understand that.' In battle, there's no mundane, there's no slogging through the day. There are no decisions to be made. It's just quick reactions. That's it."

Kurek says he has never dealt with PTSD, but was inspired to write about it from talking with fellow veterans and conversations with his mother, a VA psychologist.

"I wanted to be truthful without pandering," he says. "I wanted to capture images of people who are uncomfortable in crowds and have these outbursts of anger that they know is not them ... The whole 'never be the same again' is about how one of the worst things with PTSD is that people say they want to go back to the way it was, when the reality is that it will never be the way it was, ever .... It's about accepting that (and) that that doesn't have to be the end of the story."

Stephen Covell, an Army veteran from San Mateo, Calif., sent in a few demos of songs he'd written. Two were selected: "On That River" and "Sand Hills to Sandals." He says he was inspired to write the latter song as he was flying home from Iraq and looking out his window at the North Carolina countryside. "Seeing all the green grass, lawns and fields and everything – it had just been so long since we'd seen anything like that," Covell says. "It was that surreal feeling of being back to familiar territory after being somewhere so weird. And the kind of back and forth where it feels good to be home, but it also feels sort of alien to be back in my old environment."

Covell was joined on the Operation Encore record by 10 other musicians, some of whom sent their submissions as iPhone recordings or even written lyrics. Rachel Harvey Hill, a military spouse, was one of them. A friend urged her to submit "Another Trip Around the Sun," a song she wrote for her husband on the couple's 10th anniversary about their shared experiences as a military family.

Theresa Denofre, who currently serves on active duty with the Air Force, performs one of her original songs on the ukulele.
Photo by Lucas Carter

"When I wrote it, I started thinking about what a journey our marriage had been so far," Hill says. "I was thinking about all the good, the bad and the mundane that we had been through."

She says she's proud to have been included on the CD and to have written a song to which so many veterans connect. "It's just been an awesome surprise, and already I have had so many people come up and say, 'I really relate to your song' – especially military spouses, who say they understand what the song is about."

According to Brine, Operation Encore's mission is to tell stories like Hill's, highly personal and with an accurate depiction of military life. "At a time less than 1 percent of the population serves, there are a lot of folks out there who have never even met a veteran, don't know anybody in uniform and don't know what it means," he says. "We've got a lot of challenges and stereotypes to overcome."

Andy Romey is an assistant editor for The American Legion's Media & Communications Division.

Learn more about Operation Encore and watch a video: ***www.legion.org/legiontv***

CENTENNIAL

Post 479, Swanton, Ohio

American Legion Family members from Ohio's 1st District recently celebrated the 90th birthday of Post 479 in Swanton by "reliving the Roaring '20s." A local high school band played patriotic music while the post had a hog roast and served food popular during that era.

Share your post's legacy

Upload photos, stories and videos related to your post's history on the Legion's Centennial Celebration page.

www.legion.org/centennial

SUCCESS

A SEAL's seven rules

Former Navy SEAL Brent Gleeson recently offered *Inc.* magazine readers seven rules he learned in the service that can help anyone "live to be your most effective."

Be loyal. "Loyalty is about leading by example, providing your team unconditional support and never throwing a team member under the bus."

Put others before yourself. "Ask yourself what you will do to add value to your team, such as simply offering your assistance with a project. The challenge is overcoming the fear that your team member might say, 'Yes, I really need your help with this project ... tonight.'"

Be reflective. "Reflective people often spend too much time analyzing their actions. But imagine if you could harness this talent into something highly valuable."

Be obsessively organized. "Some of us innately have this ability, often to a fault, and some have to work at it a bit more."

Assume you don't know enough. "Any effective team member understands that training is never complete. It's true in the SEAL teams, and it's true in any elite team. Those who assume they know everything should be eliminated. Those who spend time inside and outside the workplace developing their knowledge and skills will provide the momentum for their team's forward progress."

Be detail-oriented. "Don't ask yourself what you are going to do today to be successful; ask how you are going to do it."

Never get comfortable. "Always push yourself outside your comfort zone. If you do this with every task you take on, that boundary will continue to widen. This process will ensure that you are continually maximizing your potential, which will positively impact your team."

CAREERS

In today's job market, specialists dominate

Companies hire specialists – people who have specific expertise in job functions, industries, professions, technologies and so on. In years past, there were plenty of generalist jobs – midlevel management positions that required broad skills. Some of those jobs still exist, but they're few and far between, and often reserved for the highest-level positions like president, CEO and COO.

In today's competitive job market, specialists dominate. Companies don't need you to be able to do 10 things. They need you to do one or two things very well. For military personnel transitioning into the private sector, being a specialist is a huge advantage. Whether a network engineer, communications specialist, logistics manager, accountant or any one of scores of other jobs, you can position yourself with clarity.

Clarity is vitally important since it instantly communicates who you are and the value you bring to an organization. If a company is searching for an experienced aircraft maintenance engineer – and that's precisely what you did – you can make it easy for them to identify you as a quality hire.

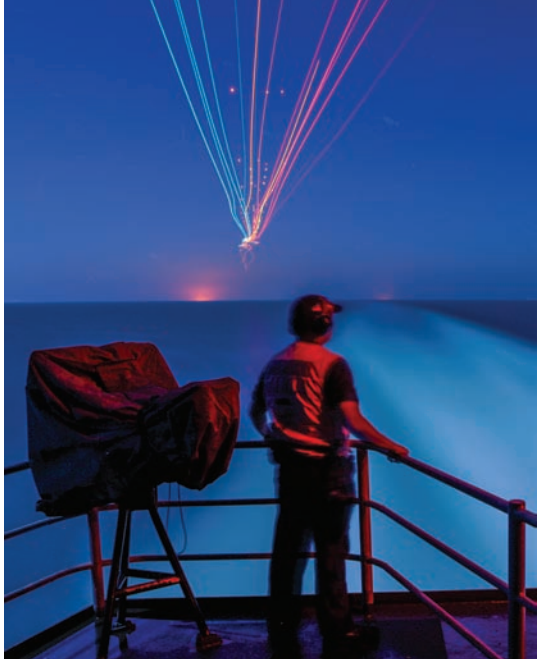
How? By writing a résumé, LinkedIn profile and cover letter that showcase your skills, credentials and more that are related to aircraft maintenance. For example, don't start your résumé with a heading called "Skills." Instead, start with: AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE ENGINEER – 8 Years' Experience.

Someone looks at your résumé and instantly knows who you are, and that is very important. It's the headline that will capture their interest. Then follow up with relevant content – responsibilities, achievements, projects and more.

Suppose your military service was 15 years, but only eight were in aircraft maintenance, your current goal. Be sure to put the most emphasis on things that are related and don't waste a lot of space on things that aren't.

Focus your career communications on what matters now, and what's related to the jobs you're targeting today, along with what specialized skills you have to offer a new employer. Do this and watch your job search accelerate.

Wendy Enelow is co-author of "Expert Résumés for Military-to-Civilian Transitions" and "Expert Résumés for Career Changers."



Aviation Boatswain's Mate Eleizer Lopez stands watch on the fantail of the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson, *which is deployed in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations supporting Operation Inherent Resolve, strike operations in Iraq and Syria as directed, maritime security operations, and theater security cooperation efforts in the region.* DVIDS

WAR

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

Here's an overview of the U.S.-led air campaign against ISIS in Iraq and Syria (through 10 weeks of operations):

- The United States has deployed at least 100 manned and unmanned bombers, fighters, attack and rotary aircraft, including but not limited to B-1Bs, F-22s, F/A-18s, F-15s, F-16s and AH-64 helicopters.
- The United States has conducted more than 500 strikes in Iraq and Syria.
- 128 of the airstrikes have been conducted near Kobani, Syria; 104 near Mosul, Iraq; 41 near Erbil, Iraq; and 27 near Baghdad.
- U.S. airstrikes have targeted some 280 vehicles and trucks, 54 Humvees, and 28 tanks; more than 120 buildings; 48 fighting positions; 39 ground units; and 19 oil refineries.

AMONG ALLIED CONTRIBUTIONS:

ALBANIA is sending 22 million rounds of ammunition, 15,000 hand grenades and 32,000 artillery shells to Kurdish forces in Iraq.

AUSTRALIA has conducted airstrikes and deployed 600 troops to the region to train and advise Iraqi military forces.

BAHRAIN has conducted airstrikes against ISIS in Syria.

BELGIUM has conducted airstrikes against ISIS in Iraq and has sent 13 tons of humanitarian aid to northern Iraq.

GREAT BRITAIN has conducted airstrikes against ISIS in Iraq.

CANADA has airlifted military supplies and deployed F-18s to Kuwait to participate in coalition air operations.

CZECH REPUBLIC has sent 500 tons of ammunition to Iraqi Kurdish fighters.

DENMARK has deployed F-16s to take part in operations against ISIS in Iraq.

FRANCE has carried out airstrikes in Iraq.

GERMANY has dispatched paratroopers to Iraq to provide training to Kurdish troops and has sent assault rifles as well as anti-tank weapons.

ITALY has deployed 280 troops to train Kurdish fighters.

JORDAN has conducted airstrikes against ISIS targets.

THE NETHERLANDS has conducted airstrikes against ISIS targets in Iraq.

SAUDI ARABIA has conducted airstrikes against ISIS targets.

QATAR has participated in air operations.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES has conducted airstrikes against ISIS in Syria.

Sources: *Wall Street Journal*, CENTCOM, *Foreign Policy*, State Department, NPR

MEMBERSHIP

NEW POSTS

CSU-Pueblo GWOT Post 2200, Pueblo, Colo. Chartered Nov. 13 (16 members)

Milltown Post 336, Lakeland, Ga. Chartered Nov. 5 (14 members)

Post 285, Franklin, Tenn. Chartered Oct. 27 (15 members)

Michael Campbell Post 370, Sarasota, Fla. Chartered Oct. 27 (20 members)

Matthew Blount Post 555, Pelham, Ala. Chartered Sept. 30 (30 members)

Norwich University Post 1819, Northfield, Vt. Chartered Sept. 11 (19 members)

Post 334, Ellenwood, Ga. Chartered Sept. 11 (21 members)

Joseph E. Gantt Post 290, Inglewood, Calif. Chartered Sept. 11 (15 members)

Post 143, Goodyear, Ariz. Chartered Sept. 11 (17 members)

Not in Pocket Change
COIN CLASSICS

FREE Shipping with code N5486

As low as $5.50:
Great American Favorites Set

Act now, these beloved classic coins are quickly disappearing from view. Our popular set includes an original 1859-1909 Indian Head cent, 1913-1938 Buffalo nickel and 1916-1945 Mercury silver dime, all in Good to Very Good quality. Our choice of dates. Reg. $10. **$5.95 (#46687). 5 sets for $27.50 ($5.50 each).** NO CLUBS TO JOIN; NO ON-APPROVAL COINS SENT. **30-Day No-Risk Home Examination: Money-Back Guarantee.**
International Coins & Currency
62 Ridge Street, Dept. N5486, Montpelier, VT 05602
1-800-451-4463
www.iccoin.com/n5486

ASK A SERVICE OFFICER

Research your state's veterans benefits, programs

Cajun Comeau
Department Service Officer, North Carolina

Q: ***What benefits does my state offer?***

A: When most veterans think of VA benefits, they are most likely concerned with compensation for service-connected conditions, pension benefits, VA home loans and education benefits.

However, in many cases, these veterans' states of residence offer both assistance and rehabilitation programs and benefits. Many eligible veterans don't even know these programs exist, and fewer know how to apply.

In North Carolina, where I live, the state's Division of Veterans Affairs offers programs to assist eligible veterans and dependents with housing, property tax relief, employment preference and education benefits. The state also offers guardian appointment, hunting and fishing licenses, veteran automobile license plates, and a veterans driver's license.

North Carolina is not alone in providing special benefits and programs to veterans and dependents. Massachusetts and other states may partially or completely waive the cost of college at state-supported institutions for eligible veterans and dependents. Massachusetts also awards certain discharged veterans with $500 to $1,000 based on honorable service.

Veterans can find their state veterans benefits information online:
www.military.com/benefits

A Web search for "state veterans service administration" yields a list of representatives or points of contact. When applying for state benefits, it is important that an eligible veteran utilize an accredited veterans service officer.

Find an American Legion service officer in your state: ***www.legion.org/serviceofficers***

Do you have a question for Department of North Carolina Service Officer Cajun Comeau about the claims process or veterans benefits in general? Send it to ***askso@legion.org***.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Get connected

HOW DO YOU LIKE US?
For news, photos, videos and more, scroll through our Facebook pages.
SEE OUR FAMILY OF PAGES:
www.legion.org/facebook

PINTEREST
The Legion's boards are filled with patriotism, history and other inspirations.
FOLLOW ON PINTEREST:
www.pinterest.com/talhq

RETWEET AFTER ME
Receive a steady stream of brief updates about Legion programs, legislative alerts, photos and links to stories.
FOLLOW ON TWITTER: **@AmericanLegion**

INSTAGRAM
Get access to behind-the-scenes Legion images and bonus art from events and activities.
FOLLOW ON INSTAGRAM: **theamericanlegion**

EDUCATION

Fry Scholarship expanded to spouses

Q: *My husband died while serving on active duty. I am currently using Chapter 35 benefits while attending college, but I heard that I may qualify for the Fry Scholarship. What is the scholarship and its terms?*

A: The Fry Scholarship was created to honor Marine Gunnery Sgt. John David Fry of Lorena, Texas, who died in Iraq in 2006 and left behind a wife and three children.

Section 701 of the Choice Act expanded the scholarship to include surviving spouses of servicemembers who died in the line of duty after Sept. 10, 2001, rather than only their children.

According to the law:

- Eligible spouses are entitled to receive 36 months of full benefits, equal to the 100 percent level of the Post-9/11 GI Bill.
- Training must start on or after Jan. 1, 2015. Training prior to this date does not meet eligibility requirements.
- A spouse has 15 years from the date of the servicemember's death to utilize benefits. If a spouse remarries, benefits end on the date of the remarriage.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona. ***askvalerie@legion.org***

THE AMERICAN LEGION CHRISTMAS SPECIAL WITH THE OAK RIDGE BOYS!

Featuring Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers, Mary Sarah and the Martin Family.

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER FROM THE AMERICAN LEGION!

Buy 1 DVD & receive 4 ~~3~~ DVDs FREE!

5 DVDs for ONLY $19.99 plus $7.95 S&H

Share this patriotic salute to our veterans with those you love this Christmas.
The American Legion Christmas Special with The Oak Ridge Boys
is the perfect gift for those hard-to-buy-for loved ones on your Christmas list.

For mail-in orders, please send this form to:
The American Legion Fulfillment Center, PO Box 21009, Tulsa, OK 74121

THIS EXCLUSIVE SPECIAL IS NOT AVAILABLE IN STORES.

ORDER TODAY!

- ❑ 5 DVDs for the price of one – $19.99
- ❑ 10 DVDs for the price of two – $39.98
- ❑ _____ DVDs for the price of $_____

(please add $7.95 Shipping & Handling)

Total enclosed: _____

Name: _____

Shipping Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

❑ **Please charge my credit card.** ❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ ❑ DISCOVER NOVUS

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ CVV# ____ Amount: $ _____

Signature: _____

Billing Address: (If different from shipping address)

❑ Same as shipping address.

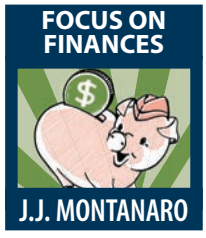
Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

FOR FASTER SERVICE CALL: 888.982.2256 OR VISIT WWW.LEGIONCHRISTMASDVD.COM

PERSONAL FINANCE

Get the most from Social Security benefits



Have you missed your annual Social Security benefit statement since mailings stopped back in 2011? If so, I've got good news for you. The folks at Social Security have decided to start sending out paper copies again.

It's not exactly like it used to be. If you're younger than 60, you'll only get statements at five-year intervals. And if you've set up an online "*my* Social Security" account, you still won't get the statement in the mail. Those 60 or older will continue to get annual statements.

The return of the statements is a great thing, because it may get you thinking about Social Security and your overall retirement plan. Here are four things to consider:

■ **Get your statement anytime at *ssa.gov*.** It's a quick, easy way to see where you stand without waiting for the information in the mail. You can verify your earnings, review projected retirement benefits and check survivor benefits.

■ **Stake out a strategy.** Your health and that of your spouse, earnings history and income requirements all play roles in deciding when you should begin collecting Social Security benefits. They also affect how you can make the most of them. Don't start taking benefits at 62 just because you can. Instead, map out a plan. If concepts such as file-and-suspend, delayed retirement credits and maximizing survivor benefits are alien to you, it may be time to sit down with a financial planner.

■ **It may pay to delay.** Social Security can play an important role for a surviving spouse. The paper statement or online account will let you know how much your spouse might receive. By waiting, you can receive delayed retirement credits that will bump up your Social Security benefits – and those of a surviving spouse – roughly 8 percent per year between your normal retirement age and 70. That may affect your strategy.

■ **More means less.** According to the Social Security website, the retirement benefits are designed to replace 40 percent of income for people with "average earnings." The more you earn, the lower the percentage of your income Social Security will replace. What's your plan for making up the rest of what you need?

As you draw up your 2015 to-do list, include a thorough review of how you're going to make the most of your Social Security benefits.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

www.legion.org/usaa/focusonfinances

2015 AMERICAN LEGION CALENDAR

EVENT DATE	EVENT	EVENT CITY	AVAILABLE AIRPORTS
Jan. 9-11	Membership Planning Meeting	*Indianapolis*	*IND*
Feb. 20-25	Washington Conference	*Washington*	*DCA*
April 10-12	Oratorical Scholarship Finals	*Indianapolis*	*IND*
May 1-7	NEC Spring Meetings	*Indianapolis*	*IND*
July 16-25	Boys Nation	*Washington*	*DCA*
July 21-26	Junior Shooting Sports 3-Position Air Rifle National Championship	*Colorado Springs, Colo.*	*COS*
Aug. 6-9	Department Service Officer School/Membership Workshop	*Indianapolis*	*IND*
Aug. 7-11	American Legion Baseball Regional Tournaments	*Various locations*	*CHY, BIS, BDL, GSO, STL, DCA/ BWI, LIT, DEN*
Aug. 13-19	Legion Baseball World Series	*Shelby, N.C.*	*CLT*
Aug. 27-Sept. 4	97th National Convention	*Baltimore*	*BWI*
Sept. 18-20	Children & Youth Conference	*Indianapolis*	*IND*
Sept. 25-27	Americanism Conference	*Indianapolis*	*IND*
Oct. 9-15	NEC Fall Meetings	*Indianapolis*	*IND*
Oct. 24-30	Legion College	*Indianapolis*	*IND*

MEETINGS

Airfare discounts for 2015 Legion meetings

The American Legion has obtained discounts with Delta Airlines and United Airlines for those traveling to its 2015 meetings.

Legionnaires who want National Headquarters to obtain their airline tickets can contact Marti Wooden at **(317) 630-1232** or **mwooden@legion.org**. Individuals can also contact the airlines directly to obtain the discounts. It is recommended that tickets be purchased at least 30 days prior to travel. Discounts vary, and the airlines will charge a service fee to make the reservation. No discounts apply with Amtrak or Greyhound, but reservations can be made online at **www.amtrak.com** and **www.greyhound.com**, or by phone at **(800) 231-2222** for Greyhound.

DELTA AIRLINES: 1-800-328-1111
Contract No. 422582, ticket designator NMKG2. Ticketing fees apply.

UNITED AIRLINES: 1-800-521-4041 or **www.united.com**. Agreement Code 868781, Z Code ZTR7. If booking online, an additional 3 percent discount applies without a service fee; service fees apply if booking through the 800 number.

Do you or a loved one STRUGGLE on the stairs?

We have the AFFORDABLE solution!

- The **WORLD LEADER** in stairlifts
- **BUY DIRECT** from the manufacturer and **SAVE**
- The **MOST TRUSTED** name in the industry
- Works on **ALL TYPES** of staircases

*The only stairlift to earn the **Ease-of-Use** commendation from the Arthritis Foundation.*

CALL NOW FOR YOUR FREE INFORMATION KIT AND DVD!

1-877-242-3122

ACORN STAIRLIFTS

AcornStairlifts.com/al

*Not valid on previous purchases. Not valid with any other offers or discounts. Not valid on refurbished models. Only valid towards purchase of a NEW Acorn Stairlift directly from the manufacturer. $250 discount will be applied to new orders placed before February 28, 2015. Please mention this ad when calling.

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

LIMITED TIME OFFER!

$250 OFF*

PURCHASE OF A NEW STAIRLIFT!

EXPIRES February 28, 2015

Lowest Prices & Unmatched Value!

National Parks of the Golden West Tour

14 days from $1299*

Departs May-September. Visit eight National Parks! Witness King's/Sequoia's scenic forests, **Yosemite**'s waterfalls, **Zion**'s domes and the spectacular **Grand Canyon**. Explore Bryce Canyon, Arches and Capitol Reef National Parks. You'll also tour Salt Lake City, Reno, Lake Tahoe and Moab and spend two nights in **Las Vegas**.

Don't Delay! Reserve your Space Today!

*PPDO. Plus $159 tax/service/government fees. Seasonal charges may apply. Add-on airfare available.

VMT vacations It's time to travel

Call for Details! 888-817-9538

2015 PRE-RELEASE

Be One of the First to Secure your Brand New 2015 Government Issued Silver American Eagles at the Lowest Price in the Last 4 Years!

$1 AMERICAN SILVER EAGLE

CALL NOW! 1.844.218.7103

Call Paramount RCC today and let us help you secure a better tomorrow.

Texas Residents no longer required to pay Sales Tax!

PARAMOUNT RARE COIN & CURRENCY

230 Country Lane Dr. • Lumberton, TX 77657

409.892.2553 • www.paramountrcc.com

NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION · NGC · PCGS · CCE · ICTA

We reserve the right to withdraw this offer at any time. Coins shown not actual size. Limited to first time callers only. VV#-AL0115

2014-2015 National Executive Committee

ALABAMA
Willis Frazier

ALASKA
James E. Pisa

ARIZONA
Richard W. Perry

ARKANSAS
James V. Bynum

CALIFORNIA
Hugh E. Crooks Jr.

COLORADO
Francis W. McCurdy

CONNECTICUT
D. Joseph Jackson

DELAWARE
Kenneth G. Whitman

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Warren N. Cuffee

FLORIDA
Dennis R. Boland

FRANCE
John H. Miller

GEORGIA
Charles F. Wessinger

HAWAII
Marvin R. Siegfried

IDAHO
Thomas E. Mattice

ILLINOIS
Larry W. Moore

INDIANA
Paul I. Steward

IOWA
Bruce C. Feuerbach

KANSAS
David O. Warnken

KENTUCKY
Randall Coffman

LOUISIANA
Charles D. Aucoin

No Photo Available

MAINE
John W. Hargreaves

MARYLAND
Elbert D. White

MASSACHUSETTS
Steven M. Jimmo

MEXICO
Michael D. Wood

MICHIGAN
John H. Skinner

MINNESOTA
Raymond DeZurik

MISSISSIPPI
Robert E. Gosa

MISSOURI
Charles W. Goodin

MONTANA
Mervin G. Gunderson

NEBRASKA
Jerry Landkamer

NEVADA
Ronald L. Michalski

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Earlon L. Beale

NEW JERSEY
Daniel E. McCole

NEW MEXICO
Felix M. Trujillo

NEW YORK
Stanley H. Clark

NORTH CAROLINA
Bill G. Richard

NORTH DAKOTA
Robert L. Krause

OHIO
Robert J. Kimball

OKLAHOMA
Jerry Ball

OREGON
Charles E. Schmidt

PENNSYLVANIA
Robert C. Miller Jr.

PHILIPPINES
Herbert J. Scholten

PUERTO RICO
Ildefonso Colon Jr.

RHODE ISLAND
David A. Golde

SOUTH CAROLINA
Mickey C. Taylor

SOUTH DAKOTA
Paul A. Evenson

TENNESSEE
Alvin R. Brown

TEXAS
James E. Prendergast

UTAH
Terry D. Schow

VERMONT
Royal E. Sheeley

VIRGINIA
Thomas E. Saunders

WASHINGTON
William R. "Bob" Wallace

WEST VIRGINIA
William W. Kile

WISCONSIN
Steve Krueger

WYOMING
William R. Wright III

Miracle Knee Support

Helps Relieve Stiffness & Fatigue

Only $9.99

FREE SHIPPING

Helps To:

- Relieve Pain
- Reduce Swelling
- Improve Circulation

Dept 70726 © 2014 Dream Products, Inc (Prices valid for 1yr.)

Miracle Support For Your Knees Magnetic therapy has been used by the Chinese for centuries to help improve circulation, reduce swelling & relieve pain. Our miracle imported knee support is crafted with layers of washable polyester/spandex for warmth and 32 - 800 gauss internal magnets that are believed to help provide relief from stiffness and fatigue in joints and muscles. Approximately 9"L x 5¼"W. Hurry, order today and get FREE shipping & a surprise gift. **Satisfaction Guaranteed or Return For Your Money Back**

ORDER NOW TOLL-FREE

1.800.530.2689

OR

www.DreamProducts.com

Receive A FREE Surprise Gift with Every Order

website offers may vary

Magnetic Knee Support	
#89755 ____Knee Support(s) @ $9.99 ea.	$
CA residents must add 7.5% sales tax	$
Regular Shipping Add ~~$3.95~~	$ FREE
Add $1.00 Handling No Matter How Many You Order	$ 1.00
☐ ✓ **FOR EXPEDITED SHIPPING** *(optional)* **Add An Additional $2.95** (receive your order 5-7 days from shipment)	$ 2.95
Please Print Clearly **TOTAL**	$

Check or money order **payable** to: **Dream Products, Inc.**
Send Order To: 412 Dream Lane, Van Nuys, CA 91496

❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover®/NOVUS℠Cards

Dept. 70726 Card# Exp. Date ___/___

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST____ Zip_____

Daytime Phone # _____

Email Address _____

2014-2015 Department Commanders

ALABAMA
Wayne Stacey

ALASKA
Ernest L. King Sr.

ARIZONA
Andres Jaime Jr.

ARKANSAS
C. Jacob Greeling

CALIFORNIA
Janet M. Wilson

COLORADO
Richard L. Humphrey

CONNECTICUT
Harry R. Hansen Jr.

DELAWARE
Robert L. Michael

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
George E. Roundtree

FLORIDA
Jay Conti Sr.

FRANCE
James M. Settle

GEORGIA
Randy Goodman

HAWAII
Dennis G. Zatecka

IDAHO
Michael N. Thurlow

ILLINOIS
Henry E. Robards

INDIANA
Kenneth C. Hylton

IOWA
Ron Struble

KANSAS
Emery M. McKimmy

KENTUCKY
Marty R. Goley

LOUISIANA
Billy R. Foley

MAINE
Richard L. Graves Sr.

MARYLAND
Carolynn G. Baker

MASSACHUSETTS
Charles R. Towers

MEXICO
Ronald Gregory Abbe

MICHIGAN
James E. Wallace

MINNESOTA
Peggy Moon

MISSISSIPPI
Ronald Bennett

MISSOURI
Dennis L. Woeltje

MONTANA
Roger O. Hancock

NEBRASKA
Frederick C. Craigie

NEVADA
Mitchell S. Roach

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Robert E. Dionne

NEW JERSEY
Michael G. Wilson

NEW MEXICO
Paul L. Espinoza

NEW YORK
Frank J. Peters

NORTH CAROLINA
Gaither M. Keener Jr.

NORTH DAKOTA
Don Weible

OHIO
David F. Hilliard

OKLAHOMA
Timothy W. Smith

OREGON
Robert A. Millar

PENNSYLVANIA
Dennis C. Haas

No Photo Available

PHILIPPINES
Gordon G. Grubb Jr.

PUERTO RICO
Angel O. Narvaez-Negron

RHODE ISLAND
Robert C. Schierschmidt Jr.

SOUTH CAROLINA
John F. Collins

SOUTH DAKOTA
Timothy M. Jurgens

TENNESSEE
Robert W. Hensley

TEXAS
Lynn E. Sparks

UTAH
Paula R. Stephenson

VERMONT
Richard R. Gray

VIRGINIA
Gerald L. Rhoads

WASHINGTON
David C. Hodgeboom

WEST VIRGINIA
Fred B. Buchanan

WISCONSIN
Robert L. Shappell

WYOMING
Patty L. Lawson

Perfect Choice HD™ is simple to use, hard to see and easy to afford…

Invention of the Year

PERSONAL SOUND AMPLIFICATION PRODUCTS (PSAPs)

THEY'RE NOT HEARING AIDS

NEW

Now with more power and clarity!

Virtually impossible to see.

Perfect Choice HD is NOT a hearing aid. It is a Personal Sound Amplification Product (PSAP). Hearing aids can only be sold by an audiologist or a licensed hearing instrument specialist following hearing tests and fitting appointments. Once the audiologist had you tested and fitted, you would have to pay as much as $5000 for the product.

Personal Sound Amplification Products use advanced digital processing to amplify the frequencies of human speech. Thanks to the efforts of a doctor who leads a renowned hearing institute, this product is manufactured in an efficient production process that enables us to make it available at an affordable price.

The unit is small and lightweight enough to hide behind your ear... only you'll know you have it on. It's comfortable and won't make you feel like you have something stuck in your ear. It provides high quality audio so soft sounds and distant conversations will be easier to understand.

Try it for yourself with our exclusive home trial. Some people need hearing aids but many just want the extra boost in volume that a PSAP gives them. We want you to be happy with Perfect Choice HD, so we are offering to let you try it for yourself. If you are not totally satisfied with this product, simply return it within 60 days for a refund of the full product purchase price. Don't wait… don't miss out on another conversation… call now!

WEIGHT	Less than 1 ounce
SOUND QUALITY	Excellent: Optimized for speech
FITTING REQUIRED?	No
ONE-ON-ONE SETUP	Free
RETURN POLICY	60 Days

Perfect Choice HD™

Call toll free now for the lowest price ever.

1-888-261-0261

Please mention promotional code 48823.

1998 Ruffin Mill Road,
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

Perfect Choice HD is not a hearing aid. If you believe you need a hearing aid, please consult a physician. Not available in the state of Washington.

81014

How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information via our website, **www.legion.org/reunions.**

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year.** Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org.**

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

351st Bomb Group (WWII), Jacksonville, FL, 6/18-21, Deborah Eason, (478) 453-7388, dbme@windstream.net; **374th Field Maint Sqdn (PACAF),** Biloxi, MS, 2/13, Larry Voss, (218) 410-2192, levs.22@hotmail.com; **3650th Mil Tng Wing (Sampson AFB, NY),** Totowa, NJ, 10/15-18, Walt Steesy, (607) 532-4204, samafbvet@aol.com; **AF Public Affairs Alumni Assn,** Tysons Corner, VA, 5/14-16, John Terino, (703) 239-2704, johnterino@afpaaa.org

ARMY

1st Inf Div "Big Red One," Lombard, IL, 6/17-21, Darrell "Buddy" Wallace, (215) 654-1969, sfidpa@gmail.com; **1st Mil Intel Bn (ARS) (Vietnam),** Dulles, VA, 6/11-14, Don Skinner, (503) 648-6059, donsk@frontier.com; **1st Trans Bn (FAMF),** Washington, 5/3-5, Bruce Binns, (269) 345-6279, ccbaypiper@iserv.net; **3rd Bn 8th Inf "Ivy Dragoons" (Vietnam, 1966-1970),** San Antonio, 7/30-8/2, Steve Edmunds, (949) 294-6981, edmundsdb@aol.com; **19th & 34th Inf Rgt, 24th Inf Div (Korea & Japan, 1950-1953),** Pigeon Forge, TN, 4/27-29, Llannie Ellison, (205) 349-2237, bobnjoan@citcom.net; **69th APU (LaRochelle, France 1960-1962),** McMinnville, TN, 6/6, Charles Bogle, (931) 473-7354, cebogle@blomand.net; **73rd Tank Bn,** Independence, MO, 4/21-25, Bob Jones, (816) 836-0969, bobjones73rdtkbn@yahoo.com; **121st AHC 93rd Trans Co,** Nashville, TN, 6/4-7, John Schmied, (352) 633-0541, johndschmied@yahoo.com; **728th MP,** Branson, MO, 6/8-14, Robert Jean, (417) 859-6518, juanitajean@centurytel.net

JOINT

Saigon Mission Assn "The Last to Leave," Dayton, OH, 5/1-2, Hal Segerson, (731) 614-2134, hsege1@charter.net

MARINES

3rd Plt Hotel 2/3 (1967-1968), Stafford, VA, 10/8-11, Chuck Gaede,(512) 750-9265, csgaede@gmail.com; **A1/1 & E2/9 (1962-1964),** Northville/Livonia, MI, 10/1-4, Rick O'Hare, (248) 349-7036, rohare@aol.com; **Basic School Class 1-68 A Co (Quantico, VA, June-Nov 1967),** Fredericksburg, VA, 4/28-5/4, Richard Kurth, tbs1dash68@gmail.com; **HAWK Assn,** Rancho Mirage, CA, 8/19-23, Stan Buliszyn, (352) 509-2043, sb353@usmchawkassociation.com; **Nov Co Basic School (Dec 1968),** Quantico, VA, 6/4-5/7, Jack Davis, (828) 817-1013, jadavisusmc@gmail.com; **Ontos Crew,** San Diego, 5/5-9, Louis Najfus, (678) 546-1444, najfus@hotmail.com

NAVY

Albany* CA 123/CG 10/SSN 753,** Panama City Beach, FL, 10/18-23, Waverly Osborne, (850) 774-8806, reunion@ussalbany.org; ***Albemarle, Washington, 5/3-5, Bruce Binns, (269) 345-6279, ccbaypiper@iserv.net; ***Bordelon* DD/DDR 881,** Philadelphia, 8/26-30, Jim Sullivan, (919) 467-2342, sully1944@gmail.com; ***Briareus* AR 12,** Ocean City, MD, 9/25-27, Ed Grant, (419) 733-9662, edgrant76@live.com; ***Davidson* DE/FF1045,** Jacksonville, FL, 10/14-18, Mike Peck, (952) 380-7616, davidson1045@msn.com; **Destroyer Leader Assn,** San Diego, 8/30-9/4, Mike Bugara, (401) 635-8860, mjbugara@hotmail.com; ***Donner* LSD 20,** Cleveland, 5/15-17, Dennis Heimbach, (610) 775-7539, dennisheimb@gmail.com; ***Fiske* DD/DDR 842,** Gettysburg, PA, 9/24-26, Jeff Davis, (717) 752-2842, fiskereunion@vetsnet.us; ***Fox* DLG/CG 33,** Mobile, AL, 9/16-20, Michael Hare, (419) 310-2958, wyandotvetser@sbcglobal.net; ***Fresno* LST 1182,** Nashville, TN, 7/17-19, Hoss Peterson, (615) 477-5636, hosspete@yahoo.com; ***Harry E. Hubbard* DD 748,** Charleston, SC, 5/6-10, Dick Oliver, (727) 363-3059, dd748@mac.com; ***Henry B. Wilson* DDG 7 (1970-1974),** Branson, MO, 4/9-12, Bill Ogden, (620) 243-2850, timberline53@ yahoo.com; ***Hermitage* LSD 34,** Annapolis, MD, 4/16-19, Stanley Hildenbrand, (484) 919-6745, shilden59@comcast.net; ***Holder* DD/DDE 819,** Cincinnati, 9/30-10/4, Jim deBarrios, (831) 458-9062, ussholder_dde819@hotmail.com; ***John S. McCain* DL 3/DDG 36,** San Diego, 8/30-9/4, Peter Peterson, (321) 952-2066, peteusna@aol.com; ***Keppler* DD/DDE 765,** Seattle, 9/4-11, Steve Mooney, (732) 284-0134, keppler765@hotmail.com; ***Leary* DD 879,** Charleston, SC, Sept, Al Redden, (308) 530-1284, alshr@allophone.com; ***Midway* CV 41,** Blue Island, IL, 5/17, Howard Blunt Jr., (773)

Complete 50-State U.S. Stamp Collection – *Just $2*

Get a complete collection of 50 U.S. stamps honoring each American state for just $2.

Special Offer – Save $6.49!

These used stamps are a great way to discover the fun of stamp collecting (stamps vary). Many are quite scarce! Now only $2 – you save $6.49.

Send today and you'll also receive special collector's information and other interesting stamps on approval. Limit one collection. Satisfaction guaranteed.

U.S. Stamps of the 50 States

☑ **Yes!** Send my 50-State Stamp Collection. Enclosed is $2. My satisfaction is guaranteed. Limit of one collection.

Send coupon to:
Mystic Stamp Company
Dept. SH175, 9700 Mill St.
Camden, NY 13316-9111

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

558-3424, hbuggzy@aol.com; ***Mitscher* DL 2/ DDG 35,** San Diego, 8/30-9/4, Raymond Caldwell, (513) 542-9488, raymondac78@zoomtown.com; ***Mullinnix* DD 944,** Nashville, TN, 4/29-5/3, Bob Houghton, (302) 650-3042, muxassn@hotmail.com; **Naval Nuclear Power Unit,** Goshen, NY, 5/4-9, Bob Berkowitz, (845) 782-5539, fixitbob3@optonline.net; ***Norfolk* DL 1,** San Diego, 8/30-9/4, Bob Godas, (516) 293-4115, bobg190@verizon.net; **Sea Plane Sailors,** New Orleans, 5/20-24, Brian Forrester, (480) 332-7294, brian@hcttravel.com; **Seabees in Ireland & Scotland,** NMCB 62, Hampton, VA, 2/26-3/1, Norm Hahn, (715) 379-8482, normhahnjr@yahoo.com; ***Seminole* AKA/LKA 104,** Portland, OR, 4/30-5/3, Nick Haas, (918) 461-0264, seminole2015reunion@gmail.com; ***Truxtun* DLG(N)/CG(N) 35,** Jacksonville, FL, 10/9-12, 2015, Charles Bethea, (856) 795-0720, cbethea1@sc.rr.com; **VPB-111/VP-21,** Pensacola, FL, 4/27-30, Bob O'Connor, (251) 967-1292, roconnor@gulftel.com; ***Wilkinson* DL 5,** San Diego, 8/30-9/4, John Lair, (619) 479-7387, hobocamp@aol.com; ***Willis A. Lee* DL 4,** San Diego, 8/30-9/4, Frank Graham, (718) 934-6410, frankdl4@optonline.net; ***Wren* DD 568,** Galveston, TX, 5/4-8, Morris Hill, (409) 945-7225, mhill56030@aol.com

IN SEARCH OF

4th Ivy League Div C 2nd 9th Air Mobile Arty (Vietnam, Dec 1966-Dec 1967), Bo Boulette, (727) 914-6642, geraldboulette@yahoo.com

8th TFS 49th TFW "Black Sheep" (1966-1970), James "Huey" Braswell, (775) 230-8006

12th Nav Baseball Championship, Oak Knoll Nav Hosp (Oakland, CA, 1951-1952), George Bournellis, (408) 269-7440

24th Div 21st Inf (Philippines, 1945), Lawrence Johnson, 312 S. Main St., Le Sueur, MN 56058

341st Cbt Support Grp (CBPO), Malmstrom AFB, MT, Feb 1964-Oct 1965), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

341st Cbt Support Grp (CBPO), Malmstrom AFB, MT, July 1976-Aug 1978), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

341st Cbt Support Grp (CBPO), Malmstrom AFB, MT, July 1983-June 1986), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

347th Army Corps of Engineers & Families (1942-1945), Marianne Lods, (609) 774-9269, mlods49@gmail.com

490th SMS & 564th SMS (Malmstrom AFB, MT, Aug 1978-June 1983), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

1141st USAFSAS (Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, Jan 1973-June 1976), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

7519th Comm Sqdn (USAFE), 2164th Comm Sqdn (AFCS) (Bentwaters AB, England, July 1961-Jan 1964), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

AFROTC Det 915 (WVU, 1968-1971), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

***Arneb* AKA 56 (Opn Deep Freeze, Antarctica, 1956),** E. Contreras, (915) 346-2271

ASA Berlin (1968-1970), Jay "Mac the Mailman" McReynolds, (602) 437-1923

Co 844 (NTC San Diego, 1965), James Koska, (979) 289-5574

HQ 15th AF (March AFB, CA, Oct 1965-Oct 1966), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

HQ AFROTC (Maxwell AFB, AL, July 1971-Dec 1972), Terry Tyson, (717) 246-3808, terger@comcast.net

***Wallace L. Lind* DD 703 (1972-1975),** Bill Long, (319) 371-5283, e5eccwpl@q.com

TAPS

Edward J. Brown, Dept. of Vermont. Dept. Cmdr. 2010-2011, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 2013-2014 and Nat'l Constitution & By-Laws Cmte. Memb. 2011-2014.

George E. Copfer, Dept. of Ohio. Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2002-2014.

Fred M. Ingellis, Dept. of Mississippi. Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 1990-1991, Dept. Cmdr. 1992-1993, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1968-1969 and 1972-1980, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1967-1968, 1969-1970 and 1974-1975, Nat'l Americanism Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Chmn. 1985-1990, Nat'l Civil Defense Cmte. Nat'l Cmdr.'s Rep. 1970-1972, Nat'l Conv. Cmsn. Memb. 1978-1981, Nat'l Conv. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1981-1985, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1980-1990, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1975-1978, Nat'l American Legion Magazine Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1980-1981 and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1991-2013.

Carl Maggi Jr., Dept. of Pennsylvania. Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 2013-2014, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2001-2013 and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2001.

LEGION SHOPPER

U.S. MILITARY MEDALS & RIBBONS
DOG TAGS
FREE COLOR CATALOG!
TOLL FREE TEL: 800-864-5062
VETS SUPPLY LINE
10550 CO RD 81, #218
MAPLE GROVE, MN 55369
WEB SITE: www.MilitaryVetsPX.com
PATCHES
CUSTOM BALL CAPS-NAVY SHIP CAPS

Loud & Clear Conversations!
with amplified phones from
clarity
SMART FOR SENIORS
Learn More!
harriscomm.com/clarityproducts
HARRIS COMMUNICATIONS
FREE Catalog (866) 476-9579

New Issue
2015 Silver Eagles
$19.95 ea
FREE SHIPPING
Lowest price in over 5-years
Max. 20 coins
BUILD YOUR WEALTH WITH SILVER
This offer from Eastern Numismatics is valid while supplies last. Prices are subject to change without notice. We accept all major credit cards, payment by bank wire or personal check. NY State Residents add appropriate sales tax.
EASTERN NUMISMATICS INC
642 Franklin Ave Garden City, N.Y. 11530
1-800-835-0008
on the web at WWW. USCOINS.com

DIGITAL HEARING SALE
5 year warranty
$339.95 Any size or style
Made in the U.S.A. $249.95 to $499.95 none higher
NEW! OPEN FIT TECHNOLOGY Most Brands
FREE Telephone Hearing Test
FREE Consultation with Technician
FREE TRIAL • FREE S&H
Repairs $77.00 Since 1981
Hearing ONE • 1-800-249-4163
100 Main St., Marty, SD 57361
NOT AVAILABLE IN WA

HAT PINS • MEDALS
BUCKLES • PATCHES
BALL CAPS
• FREE COLOR CATALOG
• 2500+ Military Designs
• Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines
• Call now! Toll-free! 1-888-223-1159
• Custom pins & patches available. Dealer inquires welcome.
HONORS
by Hoover's Mfg., Co.
P.O. Box 547AL, Peru, IL 61354
Fax: 1-815-223-1499
Email: dave@hmchonors.com
Website: www.hmchonors.com

MEN'S WIDE SHOES
200+ styles
FREE catalog
Hitchcock
EEE-EEEEEE, SIZES 5-20
www.wideshoes.com
1-800-992-WIDE • Hitchcock Shoes
Dept. 5A5 Hingham, MA 02043

www.FlagAndBannerSupply.com
FLAG & BANNER SUPPLY
Full discounts to organizations
FLAGS • POLES
• Top Quality
• Heavy Duty
• All U.S. Made
Call for quotes and discounts
Full Line of Flags & Banners
Online Catalog
1-800-526-FLAG (3524)
740-606-1890 Also eves
fayetteflag1@gmail.com

If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.

THEY CALL IT a family tree because if you look long enough you'll always find some sap in it.

MY DOG thinks he really is man's best friend. He keeps trying to borrow money from me.

EDUCATION can get you what really matters in today's world: an assigned parking space.

A DINER at an exorbitantly expensive restaurant asked the waiter, "What's the catch of the day?"

"You are," the waiter replied.

IT'S SO COLD that cows are giving out their milk by the scoop.

I MET the No. 1 laxative salesman in the country the other day. But he's really just a regular guy.

THREE MEN appeared before St. Peter. He asked the first one, "For demographic purposes, what was your last annual salary?"

"I made $200,000 a year," the man replied. "I was a trial lawyer."

"Great. And what was your last annual salary?" St. Peter asked the second man.

"I earned $95,000 as a real estate agent."

"Very good. And you?" St. Peter asked the third.

"I made $8,000," the third man replied.

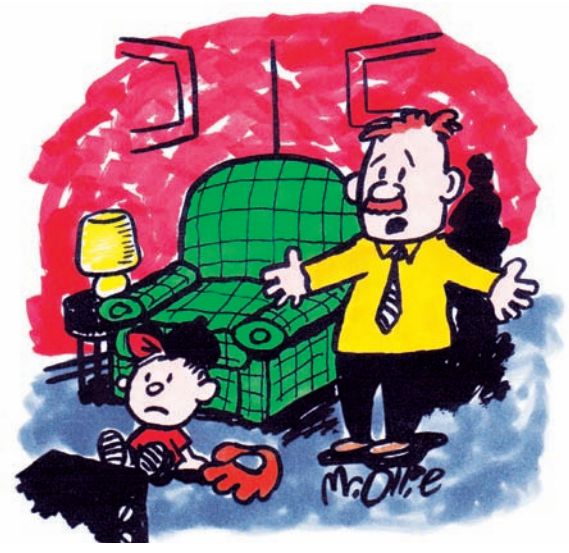
"Awesome! What instrument did you play?"

A MUSHROOM walked into a bar. The bartender yelled, "We don't serve mushrooms! Get out!"

"What's the matter?" the mushroom replied, feeling hurt. "I'm a fungi."

"The repair shop called. Your car's ready."

"I used to be curious, but searching the Internet has answered a lot of my questions."



"It's T-ball. How do you get traded in T-ball?"

A POLITICIAN woke up after surgery and asked the nurses, "Why are all the blinds drawn?"

"Everything's fine," one of the nurses replied. "There's just a big fire across the street. We didn't want you to wake up and think the operation had been a failure."

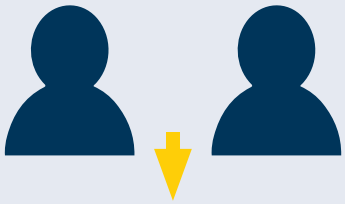
TWO NOT-SO-BRIGHT GUYS went deep into the woods searching for a Christmas tree. After hours in the cold and a few close calls with hungry wolves, one man turned to the other and said, "I'm chopping down the next tree I see. I don't care if it's decorated or not!"

"VLADIMIR PUTIN announced he's abolishing daylight saving time. He said he doesn't want to set Russian clocks back. I will say this: He's done a pretty good job of setting the Russian calendar back – to about 1983."

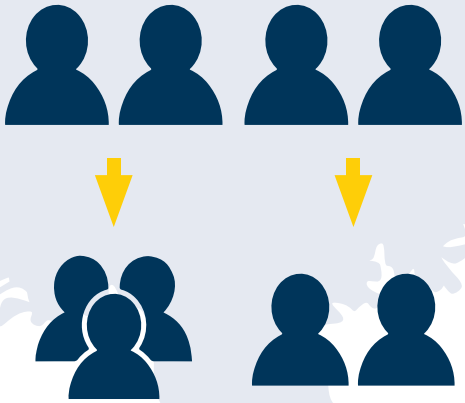
– Craig Ferguson

CREATING YOUR USAA LEGACY

Once an individual who has received an Honorable discharge or retired obtains USAA membership[2]...



...access to USAA is unlocked for their children, no matter their age.



Once your children become members, access to USAA can be passed on to grandchildren.

YOUR FAMILY'S USAA LEGACY BEGINS WITH YOU.

Begin your USAA legacy the most affordable way. To secure USAA membership for your family, you need a USAA insurance policy. While this can be an auto or home insurance policy, it can also be an affordable Valuable Personal Property (VPP) insurance policy.

VPP insurance covers items that may not be covered under your current homeowners policy, such as rings, necklaces, earrings, bracelets and watches. As little as $4 a month provides $2,500 of coverage![3]

You'll provide your family with access to the exceptional products, service and value of USAA membership that they can enjoy for life — including auto insurance, home and property insurance, banking, retirement, and much more.

Make sure your legacy is passed down from generation to generation.

➤ GET A QUOTE NOW. Call 877-820-1825

USAA products are available only in those jurisdictions where USAA is authorized to sell them. [1]Verification of Honorable discharge with valid DD-214 required at time of check-in. [2]To establish membership in USAA, eligible members must purchase USAA auto or property insurance. [3]$4 a month policy provides $2,500 on scheduled jewelry. Rates may vary due to location. No government or DoD endorsement implied. Use of the term "member" or "membership" does not convey any legal, ownership or eligibility rights for property and casualty insurance products. Membership eligibility and product restrictions apply and are subject to change. To be eligible for auto and property insurance, separated military personnel must have received a discharge type of "Honorable." Eligible former dependents of USAA members may purchase auto or property insurance if the member obtained USAA auto or property insurance. USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its affiliates. The American Legion receives financial support for their sponsorship. © 2014 USAA. 211328-0115

AMERICAN LEGION

USAA®

USAA is proud to be the
Preferred Provider
of Insurance and Financial Services
to The American Legion

SEE WHY 92% OF USAA MEMBERS
PLAN TO STAY WITH US FOR LIFE[1]

USAA members John and Gerry Hince, and their family.

Access to USAA insurance is earned once and cherished from generation to generation.

At USAA, we recognize and appreciate the sacrifices of all military families. It's why our insurance is designed with your needs in mind. Our commitment to serve military members, veterans who have received an Honorable discharge and their eligible family members: just one reason our members are as loyal to us as we are to them.

GET A QUOTE. usaa.com/tal or 877-820-1825

USAA products are available only in those jurisdictions where USAA is authorized to sell them. [1]Based on 2014 member communications trend survey. No government or DoD endorsement implied. Use of the term "member" or "membership" does not convey any eligibility rights for auto and property insurance products or legal or ownership rights in USAA. Membership eligibility and product restrictions apply and are subject to change. To be eligible for auto and property insurance, separated military personnel must have received a discharge type of "Honorable." Eligible former dependents of USAA members may purchase auto or property insurance if the member obtained USAA auto or property insurance. Property and casualty insurance provided by United Services Automobile Association, USAA Casualty Insurance Company, USAA General Indemnity Company, Garrison Property and Casualty Insurance Company, USAA County Mutual Insurance Company and USAA Texas Lloyd's Company, San Antonio, TX, and USAA, Ltd. (Europe) and is available only to persons eligible for P&C group membership. Each company has sole financial responsibility for its own products. The American Legion receives financial support for their sponsorship. © 2014 USAA. 211881-0115

SPECIAL 2015 30th anniversary PRE-RELEASE

GOLD & SILVER

2015
$5 GOLD EAGLE
AS LOW AS*
$118.00

2015
$1 SILVER EAGLE
AS LOW AS*
$16.00

AMERICAN EAGLES

Official Government Issued Legal Tender Coins • Fully Backed by the United States Government • Minted at the United States West Point Mint
Brilliant Uncirculated Condition• IRA Eligible • Experts Predict $7500/oz. Gold & $200/oz. Silver

384%+ AVG. INCREASE
IN GOLD & SILVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

A $50,000 investment diversified in gold and silver 10 years ago would be worth more than **$192,000** today! That's more than a 384% increase.**

Special arrangements will be made for those investing $50,000 or more in gold, silver, or platinum portfolios. Call for details.

**Increase based from 2004 – 2014.

*Free shipping offer limited to 30 days post ad production. Free shipping only for orders of $500 or more. Gold coin orders limited to 3 gold coins per household per type. Due to limited supply, offer may be withdrawn or reduced at any time. New customers only. No dealers please. 2015 coins will be shipped on or around January 13, 2015. American Eagle coin price shown is based on qualified orders only. Call for details.

100TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

1915
INDIAN GOLD
FOR ONLY
$359
3 COIN LIMIT!

VAULT CODE: ALJAN15

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

UNITED STATES PRECIOUS METALS

NGC

FREE SHIPPING ON ORDERS OF $500 OR MORE*

1-855-203-6320

FIT-FOREVER® STEALTH

LAST CHANCE SAVINGS!

POWER PANTS

WOW! Now Only

$12 per pair in lots of 2 or more!
Reg. 2 for 29.95

For ALL Waists 32 - 60!

Now Available In Extra Short Inseams!

High-Quality, No-Wrinkle Fabric!
Your favorite premium quality dress pants, now **IMPROVED with invisible Fit-Forever® Expansion Waist!** Guaranteed to be the Best Fitting, Best Feeling pair of pants you've ever owned! Tailored in excellent dress fabric that feels and drapes like wool, but is 100% woven polyester — machine wash & dry with no shrinking, no wrinkling, and ***NO IRONING!***

Styling Appointments:
Trim flat front, 4 pockets, button close, nylon zipper.

LAST CHANCE at this Low Price!

BIG GUYS, Same Low Price!

FIT-FOREVER® STEALTH POWER PANTS

$12 per pair in lots of 2 or more!
2 for $24
3 for $36
4 for $48

Haband #1 Bargain Place, Jessup, PA 18434-1834

I enclose $_____ purchase price, and only $5.99 shipping & handling for my entire order. Please add applicable state & local sales tax for the following states: AZ, GA, MA, NJ, PA, WI, & WV.

100% Satisfaction Guaranteed
or Full Refund of merchandise purchase price.

FOR MAXIMUM COMFORT, ORDER YOUR USUAL WAIST SIZE!
Waist: 32 34 36 38 40 42 44
Big Men (SAME LOW PRICE):
46 48 50 52 54 56 58 60
Inseams: XS(25-26) S(27-28) M(29-30) L(31-32) XL(33-34)

☐ **Famous Maker Set of 3 Belts!**
Even sizes. 32 to 60. Genuine Leather. Black & Brown assorted colors.
Add Just $12 per set!
7ØR1C (31) assorted
Imported
What Size: _____
How Many Sets: _____

On-Line Quick Order — Imported

☺ 7TC–Ø1V6L	WHAT WAIST?	WHAT INSEAM?	HOW MANY?
Ø3 NAVY			
Ø2 TAN			
8A SLATE			
6B PEWTER			
N7 CORDOVAN			
Ø1 BLACK (not shown)			

Card # _____ Exp.: ____/____ ☐ Haband! ☐ BLAIR CLASSIC
Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____ ☐ Visa ☐ AmEx
Address _____ Apt. # _____ ☐ MC ☐ Check
City & State_____ Zip _____ ☐ Discover® Network
Phone/**Email** _____

When you pay by check, you authorize us to use information from your check to clear it electronically. Funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day we receive your payment, and you will not receive your check back from your financial institution.

Haband!
#1 Bargain Place
Jessup, PA 18434-1834

For Faster Service Call: 1-800-543-4810 or visit www.Haband.com/bestdeals